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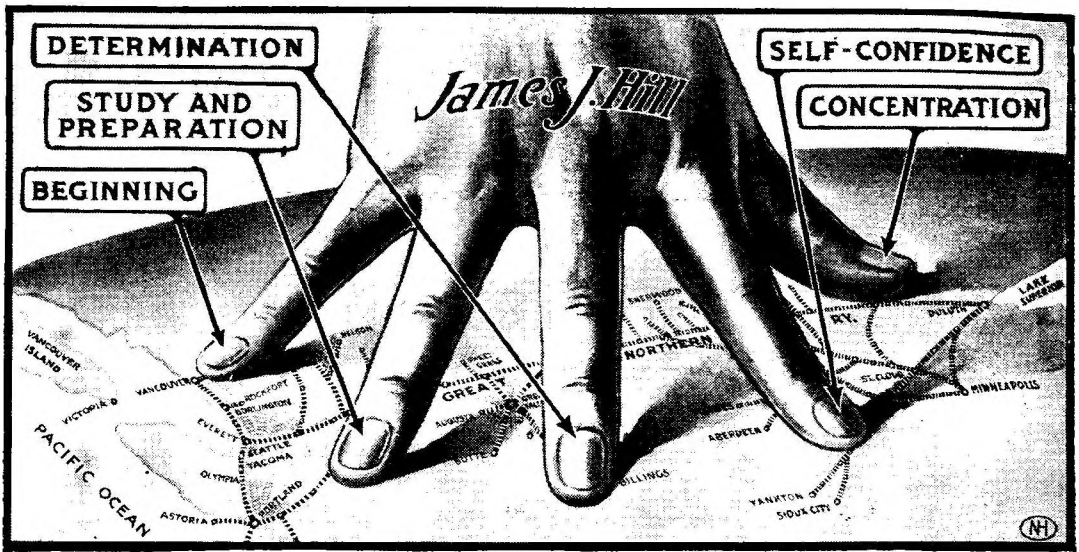

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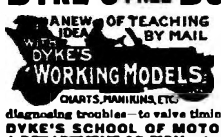

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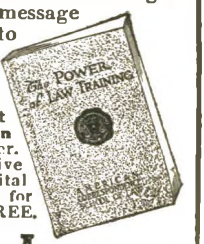

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RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE

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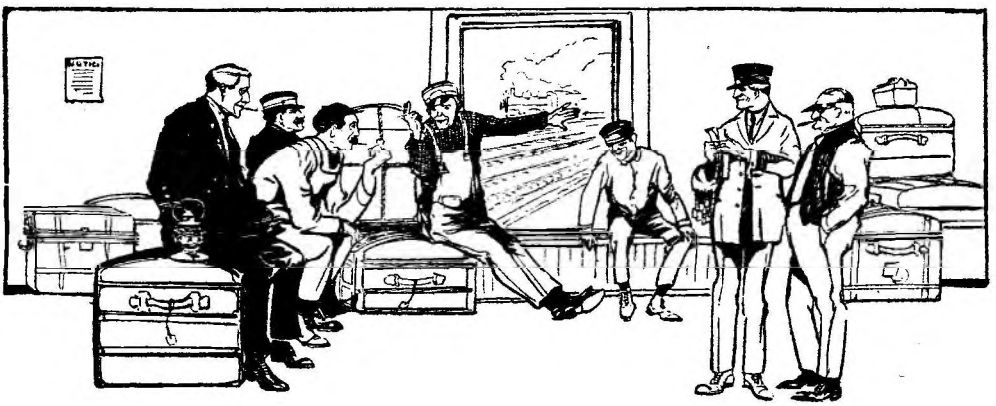
Tales from the Knights of the Railroad Round-Table



ADVENTURES OF R. R. STUDENTS.

BY J. W. EARP.

WHEN Bill Harris, conductor of the local, registered in at the yard office he was about ten minutes ahead of the "Hog Law."

"What was the matter, Bill?" questioned Ben Smith with a wink at the others.

"Two of the blankest, rankest, most blankety-blanked students I ever tried to get a little work out of and at the same time keep them from getting killed!" snorted Harris. "Believe me, if they are ever called to go out with me again they'd better have a return pass or else take out accident insurance, because I will sure be loaded for them." And with a groan Bill picked up his lunch-basket and started for home.

"Students are a funny proposition," said one of the switchmen.

"Yes," agreed another; "but we all have to learn."

The engineer of the yard engine laughed. "I remember one we had when I was working for the S. P. He was a fireman and as green as they made them.

We were working on a tramp that night and it was a hot-foot job. He wasn't very hep to the signals, so when they wanted to move ahead he'd tell me, 'Up and down, up and down.' If they wanted to back up it was, 'Round and around.' From this I gathered that the snakes were giving standard signals. If he yelled, 'Sideways,' I knew that they was giving stop signs.

"You know how they give an easy sign—that is, hold the lantern straight out with the bottom of it looking at you and gently weave it back and forth. Well, the kid hadn't ever seen that kind of a sign given, and as we gently drifted back down the lead—you know on this lead they always had to work on the fireman's side—well, I was taking it easy on my side when I saw the kid straining his eyes and I said, 'What are they saying now, kid?'

"The kid studied for a moment, then he says: 'They ain't sayin' anything. I think they're fighting down there; I see them throwing their lanterns away.'

"And then we hit! Good night! Buckled one car in the middle, drove in three draw-bars, knocked a string of cars through the other end of the track, and split eight switches. We were all night cleaning up the muss.

"No, they didn't fire him. When the trainmaster heard the story he laughed till he was sick and they give me and the fireboy ten brownies apiece and let it go at that."

* * * * * * * * *

"I CLAIM," said an old conductor as he carefully lit his pipe, "that Providence watches over the student, the same as it does over little kids and babies. If it didn't there wouldn't be enough railroad men to handle the business. One night a few winters ago I was called for No. 73, that being the hot-shot merchandise run in those days. Well, both my regular men were laying off and as a result I drew two of the rawest students you ever put an eye on. The head man got his engine on, and the rear one managed to get his end ready for the trip.

"About ten miles out of town my rear man wanted to slip up ahead of the caboose a few cars and put off some hoboes he saw get on. I told him, 'O. K.,' and away he went. I was busy with the bills and consists and other things and never missed him until about an hour later. When we stop at Haldon for water I slip over to see what became of him. The head man hadn't seen him since we left the yards. I was worried some, take it from me. Well, we got into the terminal on time, and still no sign of my brakeman. I wired to the chief and he sent me a new man on the next passenger-train, and he finished the trip with us.

"When we got back home the first guy I meet is my rear man that I had lost. What do you think! On his way to put off the hoboes, as we rounded a curve, he slipped and lost his balance and fell off on the bridge at Willow Creek. Somehow or other he cleared the timbers below. A farmer with a load of alfalfa was coming to town and was just driving under the bridge as he fell off. He lit on the load of alfy and never even shook him up.

"How's that for luck? To think of a farmer coming to town at that hour of the night with a load of alfalfa! Don't tell *me* that Providence don't watch over students! I know from experience."

* * * * * * * * *

"BEFORE I went switching," said a boomer, "I went firing on the Frisco. I had a regular turn with an old duck they called Pegleg Jennings, and he was some rapper, believe me. Any time he couldn't make time it was because the old mill wouldn't hang together. We had a student shack out that night and in addition to being a student, he was a "Dead-eye Dick." All that guy knew was sleep. I figure that I would have to have a little coal-down later on, so I don't say anything to him but watch on my side for high-ball and hot-boxes and other things that might go wrong, and if they did I'd wake him up and tell him.

"I had just started to put in a fire, when with a report like a gun the water-glass broke and in a minute the cab was filled with steam. I heard a wild yell and dimly saw a figure on the seat-box slide the window open and dive through. I

grabbed for it and got a good hold and drew the brakeman, scared and shaky, back through the window.

"'What's the matter?' I ask.

"Still pretty badly scared, he says, 'I thought we'd blown up.'

"I says, 'Kid, if we had blown up you'd never have known anything about it!'

"Fifteen minutes later he was rendering the 'Saw-Log Overture' from 'Slumberland' as if nothing had happened. He is an O. R. C. over there now and a mighty good man."

* * * * * * * *

THE old conductor shook the ashes from his pipe.

"I had another student one time," he said, "that went back to flag on a bad curve just out of Rollins. They called him in, and as he didn't see or hear anything coming he left a yellow fusee—that was the rule regarding that stretch of track. Red fusees were to be left only in case of emergency.

"Now the Mop had a branch line that ran side by side with us there for about ten miles. Just as that kid got within a couple of poles of the caboose he hears a whistle and looks back and sees the reflection of the yellow fusee and thinks it a train behind us. Before I could get wise to what was going on he cracks a red one and went tearin' back up the track, yelling at the top of his lungs and swinging that fusee for all he was worth.

"He sure was some sheeepish-looking duck when ten minutes later a little plug passenger went sailing by on the opposite track and the engineer on the same whistled back up to him just to let him know he was wise to the mistake. As I have always said, you never can tell what a student will do."

* * * * * * * *

"THAT'S the truth," said the G. Y. M. with a grin. "'You remember old Sam Henry that got killed in that head-ender over at Willis a few years ago? Well, when Sam was on a freight they nicknamed him 'Hot-Air Sam.' He was always raggin' some one, though a better-hearted fellow never lived. But Sam would have his joke.

"One night he's called for an extra and the guy he gets out is a student. Sam is oiling around when the student shows up, a great big husky every bit as big as Sam, and as you know Sam was a pretty good-sized man. He eyes the student with a glare and in a tough voice says, 'Going out with me?'

"'You bet,' says the student.

"'I always lick a fireman before I take him out,' says Sam in that tough way, 'so you'd better go back and lay off. Tell 'em you're a sick man.'

"Well, Sam finishes oiling the pig and just starts to get up in the gangway when this big boy takes him by the collar and gently but firmly turns him around so he faces him, and says, 'I'm still going out with you, old sport; bring on your lickin'.'

"Sam had an awful time squaring things with that guy, but finally convinced him he was just having his little joke and didn't mean anythin'. So-long."

Whereupon the yardmaster departed. The fireman looked after the retreating back of the yardmaster and grinned.

"He's good at telling on others," the fireman remarked, "but he never tells on himself. So if you can spare the time I'll spin a little story, and the hero is no other than our worthy G. Y. M.

* * * * * * * *

"I WAS firing on the Colorado Midland when Jim was a passenger flagman on the same road. One night there were seven sections of one of the trains. Jim was on the second section and I was on the third, and as they were spaced pretty close to each other everybody had to be on their toes all the time to avoid an accident.

"To make it worse, it set in to snowing and blowing to beat the band; you

know it snows any time in the year in the mountains. Well, when it was doing its worst something went wrong up ahead and they whistled Jim out to flag. He starts back quite lively, and when he had got about a hundred yards from the rear of the train he falls over something soft and furry that was standing by the side of the track.

"He gets up real quick, and just as he gets to his feet a big, hairy paw shot out and both lanterns go a sailing down the hill and go out—but not before Jim sees he has met up with a bear. The brute lets out a big '*Woof!*' Jim lets out a yell like a Comanche Indian and starts to run. The bear is between him and the train, so the only thing he can do is to keep on going back, which he sure does; and the bear is a close follower right on to his heels. The running ability of the two was about equal.

"By this time Jim is sure a scared kid, believe me. I don't know whether there was ever a record made for fast time in those hills; if there was, Jim skinned that record to pieces and then would have had lots to spare. Of course he couldn't keep it up forever in that high altitude, 'cause your wind gives out too soon. Somewhere he had read that bears were afraid of fire, so while still doing a Marathon he lights a yellow fusee and, stopping right sudden, jams it into the bear's face.

"The bear is so surprised he stops dead still, but only for a moment. Then he grabs at the fusee and gets burnt for his pains. Then he does get real mad. But he also gets cautious. He maneuvers around Jim, trying to get a hold on him but always keeping an eye out for the burning fusee which Jim kept swinging back and forth, scattering the hot lava from it all over Mr. Bear and scorching him and singeing the hair wherever it happened to hit. But while the bear was more cautious than he had been, still he was as mad as ever.

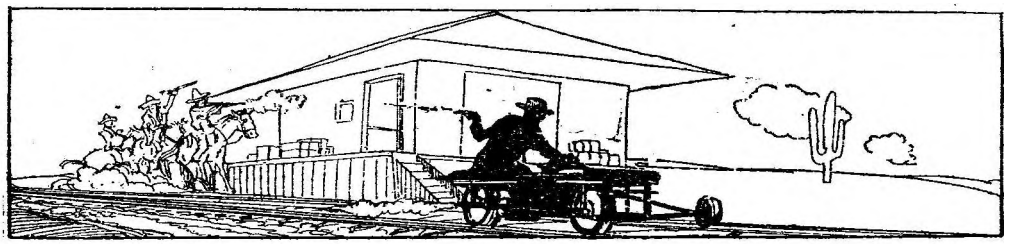
"The bear was growling and Jim was yelling to beat the band. Every time the brute makes a pass at him, Jim would step in like Jim Corbett and burn off a few square inches from the bear's anatomy. Every time he lights a fusee he sees his chance to be a martyr to a big brown bear getting better and better. It wasn't a cheerful prospect.

"At last he has only one more left. The bear makes a grab and Jim performs the usual hair-singeing process. The bear steps back and falls over a rock. Jim lost his balance at the same time and falls on top of Mr. Bearship, and in doing so drives that lighted fusee up to the top in the fleshy part of that bear's back. Good night! That bear got up pronto quick and sailed up the hill like a streak of lightning.

"My engineer got a glimpse of the red fusee and puts the brakes on at once and stops. Then he rubs his eyes as the bear went by, making a passenger-train's time, the fusee blazing to beat the band and the bear a talking to himself like a suffragette that's got beat out of a vote. While we are a viewing the said miracle, Jim crawls in the gangway all out of breath and his face as white as a sheet. Yes, sir, Jim was some scared.

"'We're just ahead of you,' he says. 'I came back to flag and had a fight with a bear. Did you see him?'

"Jim quit when he got in that trip. Told the clerk he didn't like the climate. Some joke!"



GOING SOME AT PARAJE NUEVO.

BY A. C. ROWSEY.

SIX months at Paraje Nuevo, State of Vera Cruz, had curdled the disposition of Felix Maguire, red-headed, red-tempered, blacklisted operator and station-master, also roustabout. He sat in the doorway of the station glaring helplessly at the sun-baked trail leading to the coffee plantations and told the world what he thought about it.

"What—again?" he muttered.

A burro had heaved in sight bearing Señor Miguel Romero, *cafetero*, rich in dirt, ignorance, and pesos, clad in overalls and blue shirt, barefooted per usual, and unshaven. Señor Romero daily drifted to the station. There he gazed at Maguire until he got tired. Then he went homeward. Sometimes he brought from his manager a message ordering a car for a shipment of coffee. Then, enraptured, he listened as Maguire ticked off the order. Maguire knew no Spanish—and wanted to know none. Romero was shy of English.

It gave Maguire something to speculate upon as he watched the burro's leisurely progress. Presently it drooped before the station and Romero rolled off, revealing a ragged urchin perched under a huge sombrero on the hind quarters of the animal. The pair strolled to Maguire, sprawling in the doorway.

"Señor Romero he would please know for how much pesos you sell?" piped the urchin in painful-to-hear English.

"Huh?" ejaculated Maguire.

"He say buy business," explained the child. "He say he son college in United States. Say like son near plantation. Say pay much pesos. You go 'way. Take one thousand pesos. Go 'way."

Maguire gasped, then sprang to his feet.

"He's on, son—he's on!" he shouted. "*Pronto*—and don't wake me up before I feel those pesos."

The child chattered with Romero, whereupon Romero hauled a handful of big money from beneath his shirt.

"He say want paper giving business," explained the child, handing the bills to Maguire.

Maguire made one dive into the station and another out with his hat, coat, grip, and a telegraph blank on which he had written:

> I, Felix Maguire, stationmaster at Paraje Nuevo, State of Vera Cruz, Mexican Railway, convey to Miguel Romero my right, title and interest in the job at said station. So help me.
>
> MAGUIRE.

The child translated and Romero nodded. Maguire, without a glance around, started down the rusty tracks. Where Maguire went no one knows. Somewhere he may read this and learn what happened afterward.

James Nicholson, superintendent at Cordoba, a week later nailed a mysterious wire trouble as originating at Paraje Nuevo, and called that station hard, after getting a chance to "break" him. A merry jumble of dots and dashes replied. Half an hour of hard calls failed to awaken a glimmer of intelligence.

"Rats!" growled Nicholson. "Drunk!"

Paraje Nuevo began tying up traffic in a riotous fashion, until the superintendent in desperation ordered out a speeder and hiked for Paraje Nuevo. On arriving he heard the wire trouble from outside the station and bounded in to find Miguel Romero calmly pounding brass at Maguire's vacated desk.

"Where's Maguire?" he demanded in Spanish.

"Señor Maguire is gone," replied Romero. "I have bought his business. Can I serve you?"

"Bought his business! His business! He's gone! Where's he gone? When?" demanded Nicholson.

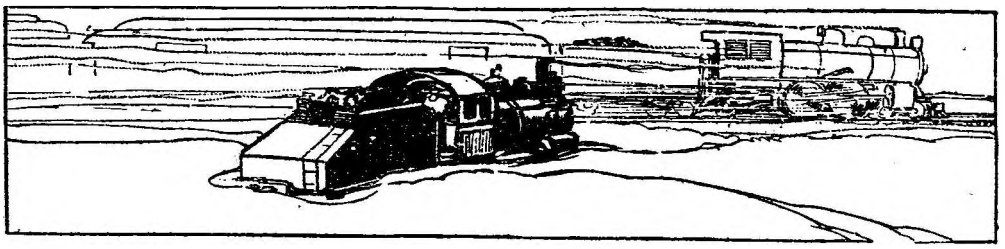
He made a reach for the key. Romero leaped up, a long knife in his hand. Nicholson whipped out an automatic. "You beat it!" he shouted. "You bloomin' *mozo*, I'll give you three minutes to hit the trail."

Romero backed out of the station and broke into a run up the trail. A quarter of an hour later, while Nicholson was trying to get an operator started to Paraje Nuevo, he caught the sound of hoof-beats outside and turned to find Romero advancing on the station with half a dozen evil-looking Mexicans armed with rifles at his back.

"Wow!" said Nicholson, jerking out his automatic and starting for the rails where the speeder stood.

A shower of bullets struck about him as he appeared. He replied with a clip of bullets, working meanwhile to get the speeder started. The band halted for consultation just long enough for the speeder to make slow headway out of the station, whereupon it came on shooting fast. Gathering power, the car sped around a curve to safety with the superintendent.

A special carrying a company of *rurales* arrived at Paraje Nuevo the following day and arrested Romero, found peacefully ticking dots and dashes into the train-orders of the day and tying up traffic *ad lib.* They took him to Cordoba, and after a while decided to try him for stealing a railroad station. But Romero would be satisfied if only Maguire should drift back to Paraje Nuevo for a few minutes some day.



MEETING ON THE MAIN LINE.

BY FRANK KAVANAUGH.

"IF I ever saw indications of a dust-storm they are in the air to-day," said the engineer as I handed him the train orders. "And with this little goat and nothing to hold her down we are going to earn our pay before we reach Yuma," he added as he climbed into the gangway and I followed.

We were taking a yard-engine, or in railroad parlance a "goat," to Yuma for

use there. Perhaps the fact that a switch-engine with but three drivers to a side and no small or "pony" trucks is one of the hardest-riding engines invented when it is making speed on the main line, is the reason why I was chosen as conductor on the run. I had been fighting the extra board a month and was all but disgusted when I was called for the extra. I got out my new train-book and came to the yards expecting at least to get a fruit-run. To my disgust I found that, as the caller expressed it, I was to "chaperon the goat to Yuma." I, as well as the yard-engine, was a "goat," it would appear.

Sand-storms were new to me, so when the engineer made his predictions I paid no more attention to them than I would have if he had predicted a rain-storm or any other common atmospheric disturbance.

The day was hazy and the sun was half obscured. There was something which may be described as a deadly stillness in the air. Far away stretched the desert. As I sat on the fireman's seat and looked ahead a feeling of loneliness took hold of me. Not a bird stirred; not even a lizzard crossed the rails ahead of us, as it is their custom to do.

Fifteen miles from the starting-point we went on a siding for two through freights. The shadows of evening were falling and I dreaded to go on with the engine. Intuition told me we should have trouble before Yuma was reached. But I closed the switch, gave the engineer the "high-ball," caught the rear step and scrambled over the coal to my usual seat in front of the fireman. We had a clear track for an hour ahead, when we had to meet No. 6, a crack transcontinental passenger-train.

The engineer started the electric headlight and for a time we could see miles across the desert, but all at once, it seemed, a wall rose before us. The light did not penetrate two hundred feet ahead.

"Shut that window!" called the engineer across the boiler-head, and I did so. The fireman at the same time fastened the curtain so that it protected the occupants of the cab as best it could.

"If we get through this with this light engine," remarked the fireman as he climbed to his seat behind me, "I'll stake you to half a dozen of the coldest bottles of soda in Yuma." In fact, we never did get through that night.

When we hit the storm, or the storm hit us, the cab was immediately filled with an impalpable sand, which made the engineer look dim and ghostly as he sat on his side of the cab. As we ran through the storm I could feel the wheels of the engine hit a pile of sand which had drifted onto the rails, and more than once I thought we were ditched, for the "goat" was not equipped with sweepers as were the passenger-engines.

I looked at my watch. We still had forty minutes to make the siding for No. 6. On looking at my time-card I found that I could make out nothing printed on it. But I depended upon the engineer's knowing whether we could make the required siding. As I could do nothing else I propped my cap over my eyes and fell into a doze.

I was brought to my senses by being thrown half-way through the front window. I regained my sitting position, brushed several pieces of glass from my hands, and turned to where the engineer had sat a few minutes before. He was scrambling out of the window ahead of where he sat.

"Better get out and flag No. 6!" he called. "The man pulling her won't be able to see our light a rail-length away."

As I climbed down from the cab the wind caught me and held me against the tank, while the sand cut my face and hands as if they were diminutive bullets. I made my way to the front end of the engine but could find no rails. Evidently they were completely covered with the drifting sand. Before I had gone a dozen steps from the footboard I realized that if I were to lose sight of the headlight I would be lost in the desert storm. I crawled back to the cab and consulted the engineer.

"I'll whistle every minute while you are gone," he said. "Place half a dozen torpedoes on the first rail you can find and we'll trust to luck that the man on

No. 6 will hear them and stop. He's equipped with sweepers, but they'll be running slow to-night."

I walked what I judged to be ten rail-lengths from the front of the engine. At that distance the whistle came but faintly to my ears. The storm tore at my clothes and the sand bruised my face. With a flagstaff I dug into the sand to find the rails of the track, but in vain. Half dead from exhaustion, I made my way to the engine.

"They'll have to hit us, old man," I said to the engineer. "Those rails must be buried several feet in the sand, because I dug for them good and deep and couldn't find them."

Just then the fireman came in from a trip to the rear to flag and reported that he could find no trace of a track.

"Worst storm I've seen, then," remarked the engineer. "Always before the track was covered in only a few places. Now it seems that it's all covered. I'm not afraid of No. 6 hitting us, sweepers or no sweepers."

We sat in the cab and dug sand from our ears, eyes, and mouths. The fireman kept enough steam to work the air and the injectors. In intervals between watching his fire we sat on his seat, looking intently into the darkness. The engineer did the same thing on his side.

Once he tried to back, but the engine wouldn't move. After that we looked and trusted to luck.

I glanced at my watch again. No. 6 was past due at the siding where we should have met her. I knew she would not stop, as she had no orders against us. Our orders had read:

No. 2718 will run extra, avoiding regular trains.

And here we were in the middle of the desert, without a flag out either direction, waiting to meet No. 6 on the main line! The situation seemed about as bad as could readily be imagined.

After a few minutes the storm seemed to abate slightly. I climbed down from the cab to try to flag the passenger-train. I had hardly set foot upon the gangway step when a cry from the engineer caused me to look up. There, not fifty feet away, loomed the headlight of No. 6. She seemed to be coming right at us—*but from one side*. The headlight shone brightly in my face for an instant, then disappeared.

One by one the passenger-coaches rattled by, the lights showing dimly through the swirl of sand.

"What in all that's queer is No. 6 running on?" asked the fireman, as the dim red tail-light of the crack passenger disappeared.

"If she's running on the rails then we're in the ditch," I said.

"It sure doesn't take a giant mind to see that," grumbled the fireman.

I went over about twenty feet from where our engine stood, and sure enough there were the rails of the track. But little sand covered them.

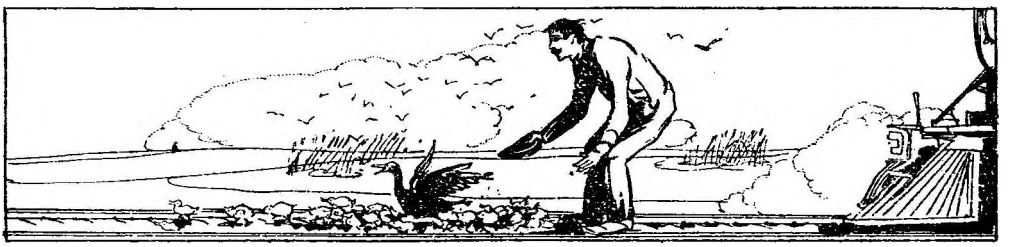
With daylight the storm ceased as suddenly as it had come. Then we found an explanation of our derailment. The road curved slightly there, and our light engine had hit a drift of sand which was deep enough to carry the wheel-flanges over the rails.

The ground at that point was what is called "hard-pan," so the wheels did not sink into it enough to stop us until we were clear of the main line.

The train-despatcher wore out a lot of good sending-muscle that night trying to find us, after No. 6 had reported we were not on the division. The next day a track was laid under the engine and it was put on the main-line rails under its own steam.

"Hereafter, buddy," said the despatcher when I next reported at his office, "I wish you would meet passenger-trains at sidings. This old idea of going out on the prairie with an engine when you happen to meet another train is wearing gray hairs into my head."

I laughed. "Hobson's choice with me that time, old man," I told him.



"SILENT" KELLEY—ENGINEER.

BY FRED SHAFFER.

"THE sphinx in the cab is the coldest blizzard I ever saw!" said the head-end recruit peddling the regular grouch. "That icicle could pull a train-load of peaches through the Imperial Valley in midsummer without refrigeration and not lose a peach."

"What's the matter, Red?" queried the conductor.

"That silent guy just gave me a call-down for yelling to him when I handed him the high-ball."

"How did he hand it to you?" asked the conductor with a smile, knowing that old "Silent" had no vocabulary to spare.

"'Hold up your hand and keep your mouth shut!'" is the way he bawled it out to me.

"You don't know Silent yet, Red, and—"

"That ain't half of it; I don't want to get wise to him. He ought to be an undertaker."

Silent Kelley, as they all knew him, was the old man of the rails on the Nevada-California-Oregon Railway, a two-hundred-and-forty-mile line extending from Reno, Nevada, to Lakeview, Oregon, and passing for a greater portion of the distance through California. Kelley was a remarkably good engineer—but when it came to the talk stuff he was behind time, running only on one side.

"Boys, I am with the silent boy," said the conductor. In the mean time the express messenger and rear brakeman had joined the crew in the smoker. "He has pulled me a good many thousand miles without a break of anything. All I ever succeeded in getting out of him was a cordial greeting in the morning and a nice little good-by at night. He never fails in this. I have had him hunt me up to say good night to me—and that would be all he said. He has been this way for ten years—yes, nearly twelve—to my certain knowledge. Let me tell you about that guy.

"One time he came mighty near leaving his old 'twelve-spot,' as he calls her. That day the general manager of the road was giving him a long talk with a lot of south wind in it. He didn't know Kelley, and of course the Irish roiled a little in the boiler.

"'Wait till you get back to your office,' snapped Kelley, 'and write that out for me.'

"That was some nerve, wasn't it?

"But when you say Kelley has no heart you're on the ties, boys. And I can tell you one bearing on that. One morning we were running late out of Lakeview. We had orders to take a siding at a station where there was no telegraph-key and no telephone. The idea was to get in ahead of No. 5. We had to pick up about seven minutes to do it, and the schedule was a pretty good clip, considering the power equipment.

"I handed Kelley his copy of the order, got his regular nod, knew what it

meant, and caught the smoker as it passed. The run is right along the shore of Goose Lake, in northern California. At one point the road-bed runs on the gravel bank. At the north end of the lake there is a tule-bed of thousands of acres, and this is regarded as the greatest breeding-ground for wild geese, ducks, and swans in the country. In the late spring it is fairly covered with big ones and little ones.

"We were plunging right along when all at once I heard the air go on. It startled me a little, for I knew there might be danger ahead. Perhaps No. 5 had picked up a little and Kelley had caught sight of her. I heard him whistle for a flag ahead, and then felt certain it was No. 5.

"I kicked off, however, and started for the front end—and there was a sight no conductor ever witnessed before.

"Kelley was out on the track in front of the engine, shooing like an old woman. As I came a little closer I noticed he had a flock of goslings on the track and was having a hot time getting them out of the way. The old mother goose, a wild one, did not fly, and kept as close as she could with her natural instinct for danger. Kelley was shooing, the fireman was laughing, and the mother goose was making more noise than the oil-burner on the engine. I was hot—red hot!

"In the mean time the brakeman had gone ahead with the flag, and I knew we were in the hole for keeps—tied up, with a good chance of flagging back to Lakeview.

"'Let's get out of here, Kelley!' I yelled.

"He shook his head and kept on shooing. Pretty soon the little wabbling things were off the grade. Kelley took a last look at the bunch, climbed into the cab, and sat there waiting for the signal.

"We were then in the hole about twelve minutes, and I gave him a back-in order. I was so mad when I returned to Lakeview—and we backed in right in front of No. 5—that I told the agent the facts and asked him to wire them to the superintendent.

"The next week Kelley received orders to report at Reno. I felt sorry for the poor fellow—I really did. He deadheaded it down on the same train with me, and I told him I had asked that the complaint be made. He didn't say a word—as a matter of fact, he didn't seem to care a whoop. We all said he had seen his last white board.

"When the train pulled into Reno the superintendent was on the platform and asked me if Kelley was on the train. I told him he was.

"'I'm anxious to see that guy,' he remarked. 'Tell him to report at the office at ten o'clock in the morning—and you come up with him.'

"The next morning we were there at the time appointed. Kelley was a large, fine-looking fellow. He had big, blue eyes and, as you know, would pass well anywhere.

"'You filed this complaint, did you, Buck?' asked the superintendent.

"'Yes, sir, I did,' I replied.

"'And did you stop the train, as it is reported you did, in order to put those wild goslings off the track?' he asked of Kelley.

"Kelley nodded—which meant, 'Yes.'

"'Would you repeat the same thing under the same circumstances, with a northbound train front of you?'

"Kelley nodded again.

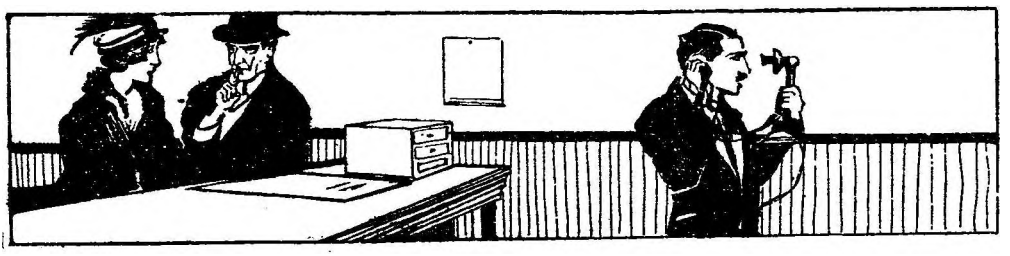
"'Well, go back and go to work, Kelley. Some of these days I will have something better for you!'

"I couldn't understand the thing at all, and after Kelley had gone down-stairs I told the superintendent I didn't know what the engineer had been called on the carpet for.

"'I had heard so much about Silent Kelley,' replied the superintendent, 'and I was anxious to get a look at the fellow more than anything else. This curiosity was increased the other day coming down the line from Alturas. Kelley's wife and ten children were on the train—a combination coach-load. It was one of the finest families you ever saw.

"'The wife told me her husband had been running on the road for fifteen years, that he had never killed or crippled a living thing, and that he was proud of his record because no claim-agent had ever settled a bill caused by him in any way. I looked up the record when I returned, and you know that is true. I suppose that is the reason he stopped to shoo the goslings off the track—but he came in on time, didn't he?'

"Now, boys, what do you think of handing it to a fellow with a record like that? That fellow couldn't pull peaches through the Imperial Valley without refrigeration for them, eh? Why, he's got the biggest heart you ever saw! Fifteen years of service and a claim has never been presented to the company for anything he killed or crippled. That's going some, isn't it?"



A "FLASH" THAT SAVED ME $15.

BY J. M. CURTIS.

DID you ever notice that little nickel-plated rim around the transmitter on a telephone? No? Well, just notice it—be kind to it. That's your friend; at least it proved to be mine. Two years ago I was relieving the agent at a summer resort of the middle West. We had several trains a day, and there was also a line of passenger-boats that made the place, though they were not connected with the railroad.

One Saturday, right close to the noon hour, a lady and gentleman came into the office in a somewhat hurried and excited manner. They were elegantly dressed and both displayed diamonds. In fact, they bore every mark of wealth and refinement.

"We find ourselves," said the man, "in a very embarrassing predicament. We bought our tickets last evening for the boat, and neither of us discovered until after the boat was under way that we had left our money at home. Could you be kind enough to cash Judge R——'s check for five dollars?"

Now, I knew Judge R—— to be a retired member of the bar and a wealthy mine-owner. So I told the man I could. He wrote out a check and handed it to me. It was for fifteen dollars, and was signed William Anderson. I handed it back to him, and declined to honor it, saying that I had supposed I was to cash Judge R——'s check for five dollars. "Anderson" replied that he was the judge's butler, that the lady with him was governess for the judge's children, and that everything was all right. Though I did not know the judge personally, common sense told me that his children, if he had any, would very naturally be of an age where they would not require the services of a governess; so I was firm in my refusal to cash the check.

Mr. Anderson suggested: "You have a telephone there. If you will call up the City National Bank you will find that all is right." He even gave the phone number offhand.

I told him that all the banks closed at noon on Saturday, and it was now after

twelve o'clock. He replied that Mr. Edwards, the assistant cashier, was always there Saturdays until one o'clock. In view of the fact that he seemed to be familiar with the bank officers' names as well as the bank's phone number, I thought it worth while to go further with the matter; so I stepped to the phone on the desk and asked for the number he had given me.

We had been standing by the open door of the ticket office; the desk-phone was directly across the room, not more than seven or eight feet away, so that as I sat down to the instrument the pair were directly behind me. Up to this time the lady with Anderson had taken no part in our conversation. Now, as I asked Central for the number, the lady said: "Be sure and tell them—"

But the sentence was not finished. I wish I could portray what I saw in that little nickel-plated rim on the transmitter of the phone. Anderson put up both hands, pushed the woman back, and shook his finger under her nose, actions which said to me far more plainly than words: "Keep quiet now; I've got the fish hooked all right."

I did not let on that I had noticed anything, but sat at the desk a couple of minutes longer. Then I said, as if to Central: "Don't answer, eh?" and hung up the phone, though I had heard nothing through it. I told Anderson then that I could not cash his check and made the statement very firmly. Upon leaving me the pair stopped a short distance down the platform, where they held a very heated discussion, though I could not hear much of it.

A couple of days later I learned that one of the captains of the boat line was looking for a man named Anderson who owed him fifteen dollars; and he followed up his claim far enough to discover that the authorities at Minneapolis were looking for the same man. I congratulated myself on my narrow escape, but I gave due credit where it belonged—to the telephone. And I still keep that little rim bright and clean; it may serve me again.

SONG OF THE ENGINE.

JOHN RANDOLPH STIDMAN.

I'M the king of a broad highway;
I rule with an iron heel,
And over a thousand miles a day
I swing on my road of steel.
Then what care I for the winds that blow?
The driving rain or the drifting snow?
Like a giant of old on, on I go,
While before my breath they reel.

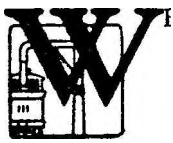
FAR up to the mountain's crest I climb
And then with a plunge away
Down-grade I rush to the clanging rime
Of the driving-wheels at play.
I bear a nation's wealth in my train—
Iron, coal and cotton, meat, fruit and grain—
While often its human joy or pain,
I hold in my mighty sway.

I BOAST my breed of a conquering line;
My fight is always won.
The strength and brains of the years are mine;
My work is never done.
The only master I own is he
Who sits in the cab and speaks to me,
We're soul to soul in unity,
To the end of the long, long run.

THE MONGREL OF KILMACUD.

BY E. A. MORPHY.

A Mottled-Gray Streak of Duty and Dog-Flesh Challenges Steam and Fate for the Life of a Child.



WHEN Barney Quigley's son was six months old the railway company opened the new club and golf-links at Ballyfinucane.*

Prior to that calamity Barney's job as gatekeeper at the Kilmacud Crossing was an ideal sinecure for a one-legged man. This was as it should be, because Barney had lost one of his extremities in a shunting accident the year after he married Norah Byrne.

The number of ordinary vehicles using the Kilmacud road averaged about six a week. The pedestrians squeezed through the wicket gates. Therefore all that the guardian of the crossing had to do was to keep the public thoroughfare normally closed to all vehicular traffic, thus leaving the line free for the trains.

Consequently Mr. Quigley had ample time to devote to the cultivation of the potato-patch, which extended ribbonlike along the upper embankment from a point about seventy yards below the crossing to a remoter distance that varied according to the benignity of the seasons and the serviceability of Barney's surviving leg.

With the opening of the golf-links, however, the curse of the motorist fell like a blight upon the crossing. Golfers were coming and going in their snorting cars at all hours of the night and day; and Barney found himself confronted with the frightful alternative of either allowing some express trains to go to smash against the Kilmacud gates or—what was equally unthinkable—neglecting his potato-patch.

Then it was that Norah suggested a dog.

"We'll want one soon, anyway," said she, "to hold back little Barney here from crawling on the line and killing himself. And 'twill be aisy to teach the creature to understand the bell and the racket of the signal wires while he's minding the child. Then he'll come running for you or me if a thrain do be happening along unbeknownst to us."

Thus it was that "Mike" came to the cabin at the crossing. He cost nothing, and he looked the price. His mother was a blend of Newfoundland and collie, while his sire was an intelligent but unlovely animal that followed the butcher's cart.

With such parentage it was small blame to the brute that he was about the ugliest thing on four legs that you could expect to find between Ballyfinucane and breakfast.

As offsetting his unfortunate appearance, however, was the fact that he had the heart of an ox and more intelligence than many a mortal. And few human babies had ever a more devoted nurse in cap and frills than little Barney Quigley found in the shaggy-coated mongrel that was his guardian in the cabin by the crossing at Kilmacud.

All day long—when no sterner duty was afoot—Mike would play with the youngster. But early in his career he had learned that his first and supreme call was the trains.

The instant his keen ears detected a tinkle of the bell in the signal box or a jerk of the semaphore wires he sprang like a streak from whatever play or dream he had on hand, and sped, barking, to Norah or his master.

Mike had never seen a sheep. At any rate, he had never driven one; but ineradicable in his veins flowed the strain of his maternal grandsire, the collie. He had the innate instinct to guard, drive, and

* Pronounced Bally-Finnookin.

round up his charge. Having no sheep to look after, he applied the instinct to his care of the baby; and it was a delight to observe with what marvelous tact and sagacity he would keep the little fellow from crawling out on the line.

Sometimes he would drive little Barney away by simply barking. At other times he would jump and push the youngster or catch his little skirt in his teeth and bodily drag him away from the path of danger.

Again he would leap up with his paws on the child's chest, so as to knock him over. Then it was a certainty that little Barney would pick himself up angrily and pursue his playmate, eager to beat Mike in his baby wrath. The dog would cringe and cower and whimper as if dreadfully afraid; but all the time it kept luring its charge to a place of greater safety.

Little Barney was about two and a half years old when the bad winter came to Kilmacud, and the harsh spring.

Quigley's potatoes got frosted; Norah lost her health, and, to crown all, little Barney took to growing too fast—making nothing but length, with no meat on his bones—and Dr. Egan said that the child would have to get plenty of milk as well as medicine.

Milk costs money, and the Quigleys' small savings were all gone when the further order came that Norah ought to have a bit of meat and a bowl of soup more than once a week, and that every day there must be extra milk for little Barney.

McShane, the quarryman from Enniscarragh, knew of a good milking-goat that ten shillings would buy; and he was more than glad and willing to give his one-legged friend a lift on his cart over the six miles to Ballyfinucane, where the goat was for sale, so that Barney might see the animal and purchase it if he so desired.

A trip to Ballyfinucane was a long journey for Quigley—and it took the last sixpence in the house to make up the half sovereign that would pay for the goat. But he could not stand the sight of little Barney wasting to a skeleton before his eyes, so he thanked the kindly quarryman for the lift, and set off to inspect the nanny-goat.

Norah was sitting in her chair at the door about an hour later—waiting for Mike to announce a train—when she chanced to take a look up from the sewing in her hand and saw a policeman coming along the path to the cabin.

Her heart misgave her at the sight of the black uniform—not that she or Barney had ever done hurt or harm to any man, but bad luck had been with them ever since the early winter, and she felt that more trouble was brooding.

"'Tis the fine morning, Mrs. Quigley," said the newcomer cheerily. "Is himself about?"

It was Sergeant Kinsella of Enniscarragh; Norah knew him well.

"Sure and he's not, sergeant," she replied, comforted that it was no new accident to Barney that brought the unusual visitor.

And then in the fashion of her kind she explained the cause of her husband's absence and also the entire history of little Barney and the frosted potatoes, her own illness, and the price of the coming goat.

Kinsella nodded his head sympathetically at each point in the recital.

"'Tis too bad, entirely!" he added. "Begobs, but yez do be having trouble enough!"

He coughed and picked at his mustache uneasily. Norah again grew afraid.

"What is it, sergeant?" she whispered.

Kinsella jerked his thumb to where little Barney was tumbling in the sun with the genial mongrel—poking and laughing and pulling at the creature's eternally half-cocked ears.

"'Tis the dog, ma'am," he explained apologetically. "Ye see, Barney has took out no license for him—it was seven and sixpence he should have paid—and they do be sending out summonses for all the people that have got out no licenses. 'Tis black sorry I am, ma'am!" he went on. "But I'm afeard that now he'll have to pay the costs of the summons as well as the seven and six."

He drew a blue paper from the breast-pocket of his tunic as he spoke, and looked away furtively at the blue hills behind Knockfallagh as he held it out to Norah.

"Seven an' six! Heaven help us all, sergeant! Seven an' six!"

Norah thrust her apron to her mouth as she gaped her terror at the sergeant. At that moment Mike suddenly sprang to his feet and shook himself free of small Barney. Barking like fury, he charged straight at Mrs. Quigley.

"Aisy! Aisy, sergeant, *avick!*" she pleaded hastily as Kinsella gripped the truncheon at his hip. "'Tis only the thrain he's telling me about—I never heard it, an' me talking with yez! Glory be! But what will happen to us all if Mike is took an' there's nobody to give warning about the thrains? Be your l'ave, sergeant," she half sobbed as she ran over to close the gates and left Mike wagging his tail merrily at the police officer—plainly inviting the official encomiums which he felt in the circumstances were his due.

Sergeant Kinsella shook his head. He was only doing his duty; but somehow it did not seem right.

He dug down into his trouser-pocket with his right hand and grabbed with his left at little Barney, who was scampering off to watch the train through the railings that enclosed the line.

"Here ye are, *avick!*" said he as he thrust a penny into the urchin's fist. "'Twill buy sugar barley for yez!"

Norah came back from the gates and threw up at him from her brimming eyes a glance of mute inquiry and appeal.

"Sure we can't help it, ma'am," he explained. "I'm only sent up here by the petty sessions clerk. Ye see, it's the law of the land that every dog in the kingdom must pay seven shillings and sixpence for a license every year, unless it's a shepherd's dog or a farmer's dog for stock-minding or a dog for leading a blind man. If the license ain't took out be the 31st of March they summons the owner and he has to pay the license and the costs of the summons and a fine maybe—that's the law!"

Norah was an ailing woman. She felt herself going faint and pale.

"But if it's a dog for saving the lives o' childher, or help a one-legged man to close the gates again' the coming o' the thrain—"

Her voice died away into a whisper.

Kinsella shook his head again.

"I'm sorry, ma'am," said he, "but it's not exempt under the law."

Norah was still crying quietly into her apron when McShane's cart came back over the side of the hill and set down Barney and the new goat.

"Powers above! But what is it, *asthore?*" he cried as he hobbled over to solace her.

She told him of the visit of Sergeant Kinsella, and added that he would have to go down to the Enniscarragh petty sessions on the coming Tuesday and pay the fine and the costs and the license—a pound or more belike in all.

"But sure we can't do it, *alannah!*" he murmured dazily. "The last ten shillings we had is gone on the goat!"

Norah said nothing. She again covered her face with her apron and wept the quiet tears of despair.

"What can they do, *alannah?*" mumbled Barney. "Yez can't squeeze blood out of a stone!"

Norah looked up, wild-eyed.

"They can kill Mike, Barney!" she gasped. "And they'll send youse to jail!"

Barney shifted his artificial leg so as settle down on the little bench beside her. He caught her timidly around the waist and tried to pat one hand so as to hearten her.

"Sure, God's will be done, *alannah!*" said he helplessly. "God's howly will be done!"

A blue summons conveys horrors enough to those who can study and understand every word of its awesome verbiage. To Barney and Norah Quigley it was the incarnate embodiment of every hideous cruelty and despotism conceivable under the majestic iniquity of the law.

Barney would have resented the imputation of illiteracy; but his academic knowledge—his book-learning, so to say—had rusted through lack of practise. He had no penmanship, and he had just enough "reading" to be able to tell on a comparatively brief examination whether a newspaper was turned right side up or upside down.

The horrors of the summons, therefore, were limited only by his own imagination. What its potentialities might be he did not attempt to determine; but he knew that as a preliminary it portended his own incarceration at Enniscarragh, the subsequent issuance of a death-warrant for Mike, and all the corollary tragedies that would thereupon ensue.

The one-legged former railway porter was not a demonstrative person; but he had all the burning affection of the Celt for the few things for which he really cared. Those were little Barney and Norah and Mike.

Two and a half years of such intimacy

as life in a lonely cabin affords had rendered the dog as absolutely and integrally a part of the Quigley family—from Barney's point of view—as Norah herself or little Barney.

For the first few days the unhappy man felt inclined to reproach himself for the extravagance of buying the goat. Then he saw otherwise.

"Sure 'twas death for the child, anyways," he reflected. "Without the milk the 'decline' would murder him; without the dog it would be the thrains—"

Mike scampered in, barking loudly, to arouse him.

"Mother o' Mercies!" he groaned as he rose to his feet laboriously. "Mother o' Mercies! We must still look afther the thrains!"

It was the Monday after Sergeant Kinsella's visit; but Barney had aged ten years in those five days. His good leg seemed unsteady, his false one dragged low.

Even Mike noticed the change and—ignorant of his own impending doom—watched his master with perturbed anxiety.

The time was about three o'clock in the afternoon—an hour which normally no train was due at the crossing—and Quigley wondered what brought a special there, disturbing his sorrow on such a dreadful day.

As he hobbled over to the gateway the approaching special was not yet in sight around the bend up the line; but a motor-car was speeding up the rise of the Enniscarragh road, and Barney knew that he would have to hurry so that the traveler would not be caught on the tracks.

The new goat was browsing contentedly on the ribbon of grass and weeds that flourished in a gradually widening wedge from the crossing gate to the beginning of Barney's potato-patch. Subconsciously he cursed the innocent animal whose advent had synchronized with his great misfortune.

Mike, as was his custom, dashed on the footway to chivvy the still unaccustomed creature out of any risky proximity to the metals.

The motor-car reached the crossing just as the gates shut fast, and the chauffeur yapped out a pungent oath of disappointment.

"I couldn't help it, sor!" apologized Barney respectfully to the distinguished-looking, clean-shaven man who sat beside a bag of golf-sticks in the body of the car.

This clean-shaven personage was a complete stranger to Kilmacud; but he was obviously a golfer bound for Ballyfinucane, and therefore one of Quigley's natural enemies and oppressors.

"Why can't we pass through, my man?" he inquired sharply. "There's no train in sight."

Barney shook his head and sighed.

"The regulations, sor," said he. "The thrain is signaled. It would be me discharge, sor, if they knew I let ye through before it went by."

The golfer took a second glance at the dejected-looking gatekeeper.

"What is the matter with you, my man?" he asked. "You seem off your oats. What are you moping about?"

Barney heaved another sigh.

"Nothing, sor," he answered evasively. "Leastways it's only the dog."

Mike was standing to heel as Barney spoke.

The golfer looked down at him with a skilled and appraising eye.

"Picturesque-looking creature!" he commented sarcastically. "What has he done?"

As Barney was about to launch into an elaborate reply the train swept around the curve higher up and whistled its customary warning.

Mike cocked his ears and wagged his tail as he felt himself the subject of discussion.

The train whistled again.

"It's a special, sor," explained Barney. "Begobs! I wonder what's the matter with her?"

The whistle shrieked out a swift staccato of screeches. The rushing mass of the train that was spinning down the grade at fifty miles an hour seemed suddenly to jerk.

White gusts of steam burst into fluffs above the speeding carriages as the whistle reiterated its piercing litany of shrieks. The rasping scream of braked wheels on sanded metals chorused an obligato to the screeching.

"Begobs!" gasped Quigley with a gasped voice. "There's something on the line! Hivin save us all! Be your l'ave, sor!"

He lurched from the side of the motor and clumped a pace forward to look over the gates.

The chauffeur, sensing a catastrophe, reversed the car and drew back a couple of yards. The golfer stood up on the seat to glimpse the danger.

With a whimper like a child's, but swift as a fox, Mike slipped through the gate and sniffed up the line.

The train, with wheels ascream and whistle shrieking, was tobogganing down like some irresistible projectile of death.

Mike turned from it and looked down the line—it was all the matter of an instant—then with tail out flat, and nose to the metals, he sped like an arrow for the potato-patch.

Barney looked after him, drew back, and hid his face on the gate-rail.

"Hivin help us! 'Tis me own boy!"

Simultaneously the golfer stepped down from the seat.

"There's a child on the line!"

The chauffeur turned to his master.

"Yes, sir! Hivin help it, sir!" said he.

Roaring like a hundred battles and blasting out the hot, flinty smell of sparking sand upon steel, the hurling avalanche of the braked special thundered by in a flash.

Scarce seventy yards ahead of it little curly-headed Barney was picking his way along the ties by the side of the metals, serenely unconscious of his peril.

Behind him—a mottled-grey streak of duty and dog-flesh, outracing steam and fate—Mike sped, challenging time and the train for the life of his ward and playmate.

"Toot! Toot! Toot!" again shrieked the engine as the train still furrowed its uncheckable chase along the smoking rails of the down-grade.

Little Barney turned and saw his hurrying doom.

His blue eyes opened wide as he suddenly stood stock-still—paralyzed by the imminence of annihilation.

Then, hot through the air, sprang the swift bulk of the gray galloper.

Over and over in a swirling crash—dog and boy, locked and clenched—they rolled together down the side of the drain as the slithering special shrieked by.

"Buck up, guv'nor!"

The chauffeur was shaking Quigley by the arm.

"Buck up, guv'nor! The dog fetched him! I fancy the kiddy's all right!"

Quigley blinked up helplessly. He did not believe his comforter. He could not cry out in the anguish of his bereavement. The tragedy had stricken him for the moment dumb.

The gray-headed golfer leaped out of the car.

"It's a fact, man!" he assured the gatekeeper. "The train has stopped. They are bringing the little fellow back here!"

Quigley forgot his lost leg and stumbled as he strove to climb on the gate.

Golfer and chauffeur steadied him as he recovered himself and peered down the line.

The train had really pulled up—far down below the scene of the near-tragedy—and the guard was hurrying back toward the crossing with a child in his arms.

Beside him limped Mike, bleeding freely from a raw scar across his flank where the engine had grazed him as he jumped to save his charge.

Little Barney was whimpering with terror and excitement; but save for a few scratches and bruises he was wholly unhurt.

The golfer tarried while the boy was taken to Norah for solace and Quigley went into the grease-box for a smear of train-oil to apply to Mike's gaping wound.

"What were you going to tell me was the matter with that dog?" asked the golfer quietly. "I know something about dogs and men," he added, "and that's a better dog than he looks."

Barney turned a gaunt and haggard face on the speaker.

"Thank ye, sor!" said he huskily. "And the law is going to kill that dog for seven and six, sor!" he added passionately. "Seven and six, sor, as Hivin is me judge! And they'll send me to jail for not paying it, sor! And that's the law o' the land!"

The color deepened on the clear-cut face of the golfer. An expression of annoyance flickered for an instant in the depths of his keen blue eyes.

"Tell me all about it," said he soothingly.

And Quigley told him all there was to tell about Mike and the goat and Norah and little Barney.

At the end of the recital the golfer gave a judicial "Ahem!"

"Somebody has stated that 'the law's a hass!' my friend," said he. "It is, however, a contention I am compelled officially to dispute, because I happen to be attorney-general."

"Sakes alive, yer honor!" exclaimed Barney, dropping the grease-pot and forgetting Mike's injury in his awe of the stranger's identity.

"You've got me at your mercy now, my good man," proceeded the golfer inflexibly, "because I am going to advise you how to circumvent the law and make a mockery of my presumed authority. If you betray me I am lost!"

Barney shrank back in grave mistrust. Was the great man mocking at his misery?

The golfer read Barney's thoughts like an open book. His blue eyes twinkled kindly as he drew a crisp bank-note from his pocket and crumpled it small in his fist.

"You wrong me, my man!" he laughed, interpreting the unspoken fear of the gatekeeper. "I am fond of dogs, and I see that you are the same. This will pay Mike's licenses for a dozen years to come if needs be. But, as long as you are keeping this goat for little Barney, my considered advice to you is—don't pay any license at all!

"With your goat and your potato-patch it must be evident to the most rudimentary intelligence that you are—in fact and at law—a farmer. Forget that you are anything else when you enter the court-house. Tell the magistrates you have to keep a dog to care for your stock—call it 'stock,' not a goat!

"Tell them that your 'other agricultural interests'—by which you will mean your very valuable potato-patch—monopolize most of your time and attention, and therefore you must have a dog. They will be obliged to absolve you from license duty, and you can hang on to your seven and six."

The speaker pressed the crumpled note into Barney's trembling fingers.

"Tut, tut!" he laughed as the astounded gatekeeper strove to stammer his gratitude. "But it is marvelous, my man," he went on as Barney stood up to open the gate for the motor-car, "how the law will favor the dog that barks at a goat, but has no mercy for one that only saves the lives of little children!"

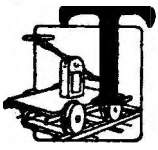
BIG WARS FOR R. R. CONTROL.

Northern Pacific Touched $1,000 a Share When Harriman Fought to Seize the Keystone in Hill's Gulf-to-Japan Traffic System.

HOW THE WABASH GOT TO PITTSBURGH.

At a Cost of $35,000,000 It Beat Nature and the Pennsylvania Road—Gates's Knowledge of Bookkeeping Led to His Becoming Master of the Louisville and Nashville—The Santa Fe Held Raton Pass Against the Rio Grande by Force of Arms.

BY E. L. BACON.



THE struggles for American railroad control have developed more master strategists than all the military campaigns in our history. The fate of a railroad empire has depended more than once upon the quick wit, the bold resolution, the swift action, the skilful maneuvering of one man.

In his office in St. Paul the greatest railroad financier of the West holds the strings to a vast network of roads, and in his old age looks back complacently, with the pride of a victorious general, to the titanic battle in which his power was almost wrested from his grasp. His name is James J. Hill.

The earth was still fresh over the grave of Hill's old rival, Collis P. Huntington, president of the Southern Pacific, when in his triumphant westward march E. H. Harriman, still a mystery but a fascinating figure in the popular imagination, suddenly extended his dominion from the recently acquired Union Pacific over the Huntington system.

Immediately Hill, the cautious, ever watchful giant on the northern prairies, scented danger and hastened to strengthen his defenses. No longer was his rival an old man, brooding contentedly over the past, but a quick, restless, tireless campaigner whose ambition seemed to be boundless.

Hill Prepares Against Harriman Attack.

Hill, head of the Northern Pacific, controlled a traffic system so far extended that it connected the cotton-fields of the Gulf States with Japan. His supply of cotton was assured through an agreement with the Illinois Central—the only transcontinental north-and-south railway of the nation. That road brought the cotton as far as Chicago.

Then there were agreements with the St. Paul, the Northern Pacific's eastern terminal. At Seattle, the Northern Pacific's western terminal, the freight was shipped to the Orient by a line of steamers which Hill controlled.

But if Hill's eastern allies could be turned against him his through traffic system would be broken. Without the Illinois Central he could no longer reach the South. Without the two roads that bridged the short gap between Chicago

and St. Paul he would be at the mercy of whoever controlled them. Even as matters stood, the traffic agreements with the Chicago connections were always subject to change or abrogation. Not only for the Northern Pacific but for the Great Northern, which paralleled it on the north and which was also controlled by the Hill forces, there was a crying need for an independent entrance into Chicago.

With Harriman so close to his breastworks, Hill hastened to act. He bought the Burlington. And he got it only in the nick of time, for the Harriman forces were about to close negotiations for its purchase. Harriman wanted it not only to forestall Hill but because his Union Pacific road, terminating at the Missouri River, could use it to reach Chicago.

A Financial Battle That Shook Wall Street.

Then the thwarted Harriman forces decided to get possession of the Burlington by wresting control of the Northern Pacific from Hill. To gain this object they began to bid for Northern Pacific stock in the open market.

Seldom has Wall Street been shaken by such a financial battle as followed. Hill, with his back to the wall, called upon his allies, J. P. Morgan & Co., for assistance, and that firm lost no time in responding to his appeal. Behind the Union Pacific warriors were three of the greatest banking houses in the country.

In that tense hour the eyes of the world were upon the struggle waged between the most powerful financiers of the nation. If Hill failed it would mean pandemonium in the railroad world, the waning, if not the fall of Hill's star, the unquestioned supremacy of Harriman in the West. Into forty-eight hours of crisis in Wall Street were crowded all the hopes and fears of the contending forces and the success or failure of the grim giant whose sway on his northern prairies had never before been questioned.

That was the long-remembered stock market panic of May 9, 1901. As prices soared in the competitive bidding, hosts of brokers sold Northern Pacific stock short, not being aware that all purchases were for actual delivery and not for mere speculation. A corner ensued, and for a few tragic minutes that meant ruin for many hapless speculators Northern Pacific sold at one thousand dollars a share.

When the raid on Northern Pacific began Hill and his associates held from eighteen to twenty million dollars, par value, of the common stock of the company, and J. P. Morgan & Co. held between seven and eight million dollars. Together they lacked a majority of the common stock. After the Wall Street panic, when the show-down of hands occurred, it was found that the Hill-Morgan forces had bought during the raid fifteen million dollars of the common stock, which gave them a majority of three million dollars of the eighty-million-dollar common-stock total.

However, the Union Pacific forces, led by Harriman, held a majority of one million dollars of the total amount of the stock. To an outsider it looked as if Harriman had won.

But the doughty old warrior from St. Paul had a shot in the locker still. The Harriman majority lay in the preferred shares. Suddenly Wall Street was confronted by the discovery that these preferred shares could be retired on any 1st of January before the year 1917, or before the Harriman forces could get an opportunity of exercising any authority.

Thus Hill was master of the situation and could dictate terms to the enemy. That is why Hill is still in firm control of the traffic system of the Northwest, more securely entrenched than ever and with such an awe-inspiring reputation as a strategist that no invader has dared come near him since that day.

Pennsy Held Greatest Freight Center.

It was a different kind of a battle that was fought to storm the Pennsylvania Railroad's stronghold, Pittsburgh, and the scene shifts away from Wall Street and the financiers.

The Pittsburgh district is one of the most important traffic centers in the United States. Its freight tonnage of coal, ore, and iron exceeds that of any other three cities in the country, and is more lucrative as traffic than the movement of the entire cotton crop of the South. A single railroad held this roaring hive of industry in its grip.

The Pennsylvania stronghold looked as unconquerable as Gibraltar. The city lies crowded into the bottom of a narrow valley walled by steep hills. It also lies at the junction of three rivers, the Ohio,

the Alleghany, and the Monongahela. Both banks of these three streams were occupied by the tracks of the Pennsylvania and its allied lines. Every valley furnishing access from the north, east, and west was crowded with tracks, and the whole south side of the city was thought to be effectively barred by the rock-ribbed ramparts of Mount Washington and Duquesne Heights.

In the summer of 1900 a rumor was wafted into the Pittsburgh offices of the Pennsylvania that the Wabash Railroad was about to enter the city. Like the Hessian general at Trenton when he heard that Washington was coming, the Pennsylvania merely winked an eye and smiled complacently. Nothing but a rumor. Absolutely ridiculous. How could the Wabash get in? How could any road get in? There wasn't room to squeeze a bicycle in, let alone a railroad.

But the president of the Wabash, Joseph Ramsey, Jr.,. had been born and reared in Pittsburgh; he had played in the surrounding hills as a boy, and he knew every foot of the ground. For years and years he had realized that his native city was the richest railroad prize in the country. He knew that it was the center of one hundred thousand square miles of bituminous coal-lands, and that it originated a tonnage of freight almost five times as great as either that of New York or London.

He knew that the Pennsylvania's lines east of the city handled seventy-five thousand tons of freight a day for every mile of track of the main line, and that in one year the earnings of that portion of the system amounted to $165,000 a mile. For a quarter of a century he had nourished an ambition for a railroad to connect his boyhood home with the West.

" I'll get it in there," said Ramsey, " and I know just how I'm going to do it."

The Wabash Plans to Invade Pittsburgh.

In 1899 Ramsey laid before George J. Gould, who controlled the Wabash system, a plan to enter Pittsburgh, the railroad Gibraltar, Pittsburgh the impregnable, where the mighty Pennsylvania would bring all its guns to bear upon any attempt at so rash an invasion. The plan was so ingenious and so daring that Gould looked at it with mingled enthusiasm and skepticism.

" How much will it cost?" he demanded.

" Twenty-five millions," returned Ramsey promptly. " Perhaps more."

Gould blinked. The cautious scion of Wall Street's great wizard was not a man to spend twenty-five million dollars on a romantic adventure. Before playing the part of *Jack the Giant-Killer* he preferred to have the element of chance eliminated from the undertaking.

Rounded Up Huge Freight Contracts.

While Gould hesitated Ramsey did not rest. He succeeded in getting Andrew Carnegie to sign an agreement guaranteeing to the Wabash an enormous annual tonnage of freight from the Homestead mills, beginning just as soon as the Wabash was able to handle the traffic. He also obtained similar contracts signed by the largest shippers of manufactured products in the Pittsburgh district. These agreements he laid before Gould and with them won Gould's consent to the plan.

Absolute secrecy was essential to the success of the tremendous undertaking. If the Pennsylvania should get the least inkling of what the Wabash people were about that road would exert every effort to thwart them at every step, and would probably succeed in blocking them effectually before a single tie could be laid. Only a very few of the most trusted of the Wabash officials were allowed to know what was in the wind.

The first stage of the campaign took place in the halls of Congress. Years before Congress had authorized the construction of a railroad bridge across the Monongahela River into Pittsburgh. The bridge was never built, and the rights lapsed by limitation.

In the hurried, closing days of the Fifty-Sixth Congress a joint resolution was produced providing for a revival of this right in favor of a company called the Pittsburgh and Mansfield Railroad Company. To the unsuspecting members of Congress it was explained that this company was organized to build a trolley line into the suburbs of the city. The bill passed.

A little later two small piers, just big enough for a trolley bridge, were built in the Monongahela. That was the last that was heard of the Pittsburgh and Mansfield Railway.

In the fall of 1900 the Wabash bought the Wheeling and Lake Erie, a single-track

coal-road. This road extended from Toledo to Wheeling. At Jewett it turned sharply to the southeast, reaching the Ohio River, twenty-five miles below, at Warrenton. There a branch turned off to the north and followed the river to Mingo and Steubenville, making a roundabout journey of almost forty miles to go twenty.

President Ramsey, tramping across the hills from Mingo to Jewett, decided that a cross-country line between those two points was practicable.

Now the time had come to fight in the open. The secret could be kept no longer. The purchase of the Wheeling and Lake Erie had passed almost unnoticed. But the most innocent of bystanders would never believe for a moment that the Wabash would spend millions of dollars to secure a short cut to an obscure way-station like Mingo unless he could be convinced that the entire board of Wabash directors had gone crazy.

Chopped Down Western Union Poles.

A messenger came hot-haste into the Pennsylvania's offices with the astonishing news that a construction gang had begun the work of cutting a line from Mingo to Jewett through the hills. The message that Paul Revere spread on his famous ride was not a bit more effective as a call to arms. The Pennsylvania sent out scouts on the instant and hastened to mobilize for war.

Before the Pennsylvania had found time to figure out the situation, Wabash engineers began to bore a tunnel more than half a mile long through Mt. Washington and another a mile long at Greentree.

The fight was taken to the courts. The advance of the new road was opposed in the courts of Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The legal difficulties to be overcome added huge sums to the cost of the invasion.

For a time it looked as if the Wabash had lost the fight. The project was costing too much. Perhaps it would have lost had not that element of chance that Gould had dreaded risen in that crisis to turn against his adversaries. Suddenly a tidal wave of prosperity swept over the country—the unprecedented good times of 1901 and 1902. This wave so congested all the railroads of the country with freight, and particularly the lines crowded into the narrow limits between the Pittsburgh hills, that the Pennsylvania was unable to handle all the traffic of that teeming center of industry, with the result that both public opinion and public necessity prompted the city authorities to grant the desired rights of entry to the Wabash.

But that did not end the war. The Pennsylvania appealed to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, causing long and costly delay in the construction of the new road, and at the same time retaliated by chopping down all the Western Union telegraph poles along its right-of-way—the Western Union being a Gould property—and giving the franchise to a rival concern, the Postal Telegraph Company.

How the Wabash Won Through.

But at last the invasion went on. The tunnels were bored, the road was built, and the most remarkable cantilever bridge in the Western Hemisphere was thrown across the Monongahela. A great terminal station was erected in the heart of the city, and was connected with the bridge by a massive steel viaduct four blocks long. In that way the new road evaded the prohibition put upon it against using the city's streets; the viaduct ran over the roofs of buildings.

At last victory—victory at a cost of thirty-five million dollars! The first Wabash train came puffing triumphantly out of the hole bored through rock-ribbed Mount Washington, came roaring across the river, and had scarcely left the bridge when it entered the terminal station. Pittsburgh surveyed in wonder and admiration the result of the feat of engineering that had brought a great railroad into that crowded center. The impossible was accomplished.

> I'm the prophet of the Utterly Absurd,
> Of the Patently Impossible and Vain—
> And when the Thing that Couldn't has occurred,
> Give me time to change my leg and go again.

That's the way with the American railroad projector.

Gates Bought the L. and N. as a "Flyer."

Now the scene shifts from the Pittsburgh hills back to Wall Street and to the time when a lone speculator who had never held a railroad job in his life suddenly—

almost in a day, in fact—became master of one of the greatest roads in the country. The capture of the Louisville and Nashville by John W. Gates was one of the most dashing coups in the annals of finance.

Early in March, 1902—this is according to Gates's own testimony before the Interstate Commerce Commission—this daring raider learned that certain construction accounts had been carried on the books of the Louisville and Nashville as running expenses.

Anybody but John W. Gates would have passed this apparently uninteresting discovery by with scarcely a thought. But to him it revealed a dazzling prospect. He saw in it the possibility of enriching himself by millions of dollars.

"This would naturally give a false impression of the value of the road," so Gates testified later in telling the story. "It became apparent to me that a good block of money could be made out of the road. Louisville and Nashville was then selling around $105 a share. I spoke with several of my friends about the advisability of taking up the stock of the road, and we formed a pool and went out after it. We bought Louisville and Nashville until we had 206,000 shares actually in our possession and another 100,000 shares in the possession of a brokerage firm under our control."

This gave Gates and his associates a clear majority of the total of 600,000 shares.

Resold Road at a Profit of Millions.

Just before the raid began the road was about to issue five million dollars of new stock, and it appeared that the market quotations would decline substantially by reason of the increased floating supply. Many traders in consequence sold the stock short, expecting to cover their contracts at a much lower figure. But the attack by Gates forced the stock up to $159 a share, and it looked as if Wall Street was on the brink of another panic like that caused by the struggle for the control of the Northern Pacific.

One night following a day when the Gates attack threatened hundreds of Wall Street "shorts" with ruin. Charles M. Schwab called on Gates at his hotel and got him out of bed. It was after midnight. Schwab had come to tell the leader of the raid that J. P. Morgan wanted to see him the next morning at Morgan's office. Morgan had become alarmed over the change in the ownership of the Southern road and felt that his firm could ill afford any disturbance in the rate situation.

The next day Gates sold 102,000 shares to the Morgan firm for $130 a share and the rest of his holdings for $150 a share. Gates's ownership of the road did not last many hours, but long enough to give him several millions of dollars of profit. And all because he discovered that certain construction accounts had been carried on the books as running expenses.

The Santa Fe's Fight for Raton Pass.

In the early days the struggles for railroad control were less likely to be fought out in the financial district. When the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe was building its line westward across the plains of Kansas and Colorado it was beset by the problem of how it was going to get through the Rockies. The Denver and Rio Grande held almost all the available passes. The Santa Fe first tried to get possession of the Royal Gorge, but was blocked by the Rio Grande in that move. The position of the Santa Fe was desperate. Unless it could find an outlet from the plains it would soon be on the brink of ruin.

The only way of getting to the south was through Raton Pass, on the southern border-line of Colorado. The road must either get possession of this pass or give up the ghost.

W. B. Strong, who entered the service of the Santa Fe about this time as vice-president and general manager, went to Santa Fe and secured from a decidedly hostile Legislature a charter permitting his road to build through the Territory. Then, knowing that the Rio Grande would fight as soon as it discovered what he was about, he sent a telegram to Chief Engineer A. A. Robinson ordering him to get to Raton Pass as fast as steam and horseflesh could take him there and to begin the work of laying rails through it.

"Hold the pass against all comers," was Strong's order.

The Rio Grande's scouts discovered what was up, and the chief engineer of that road, J. A. McMurtrie, went west on the same train with Robinson, also bound for Raton Pass.

At the end of the line Robinson managed

to get a faster horse than McMurtrie, and won the race by a few minutes. That gave him a chance to come to terms with Uncle Dick Wooton, who maintained a toll-road through the pass into New Mexico. Wooton had no love for the Rio Grande and was glad indeed to be able to do the Santa Fe a service.

Robinson got together a construction force, and armed them with guns. Before long McMurtrie appeared with another armed force, McMurtrie found himself outnumbered, and gave up the struggle. The life of the Santa Fe was saved.

Erie Planned to Overthrow Susquehanna.

This has not been the only time that armed forces have come face to face in a struggle between rival roads. In 1869 the Erie found that the Albany and Susquehanna was likely to give dangerous competition in the traffic from the anthracite coal-fields. Thereupon the Erie, controlled by Jay Gould and James Fisk, Jr., resolved to get possession of the Susquehanna at whatever cost. Gould and Fisk began to buy up all the stock of that road that was in sight.

Joseph H. Ramsey, originator, president, financial agent, and legal adviser of the Susquehanna, lost no time in strengthening his defenses. He and his agents also organized a stock-buying campaign, and succeeded in getting almost if not quite a majority of the outstanding shares. The Erie party took the matter to the courts, attacking the transfer of certain blocks of stock. The Ramsey forces retaliated by attacking the transfer of certain shares that had fallen into possession of the Erie.

This legal fight resulted in the suspension by the courts of the president, vice-president, and a majority of the board of directors of the Susquehanna. Everybody in control being enjoined, there was no one left with authority to give an order or to pay out a dollar.

The business of the road was brought to a standstill. As a way out of this difficulty two receivers were appointed to carry on the business. Unfortunately for the Ramsey party, who had bitterly opposed throwing the prosperous road into a receivership, one of the receivers was James Fisk, Jr., and the other Charles Courter, a friend of the Erie interests.

At eleven o'clock one night these two receivers, accompanied by a body-guard of directors, friends, and lawyers, were on their way by train to take possession of their charge. But the same evening the Ramsey party had succeeded in getting a judge in Albany to appoint a Mr. Pruyn as receiver. It was a question whether the appointment by a New York City judge of the two receivers from the Erie party or the appointment of Pruyn had been made first. But the Erie appointees had only just set out in their trip to Albany, and Pruyn had one hundred and fifty miles of distance in his favor.

When Fisk and Courter arrived to take possession of the company's offices in Albany they found Superintendent Van Valkenburg of the Susquehanna on guard at the door.

"As receiver of this road I've come to take possession of these offices," said Fisk, "and I'm going to do so even if it takes millions of money and an unlimited number of men."

"I hope you'll have a good time doing it," drawled Van Valkenburg.

Receiver Fisk Was Thrown Down-Stairs.

Fisk tried to shove past him, but was caught by the coat-collar by the superintendent and thrown down the stairs.

Some time later Fisk and Courter got possession of the Binghamton end of the road, where it joined the Erie, while Pruyn held possession of the other end.

From Binghamton Fisk sent out a train on which were the sheriff of Broome County, an Erie man whom Fisk had appointed superintendent of the Susquehanna, and twenty armed men. As they moved along they served upon the Susquehanna's employees the order appointing Fisk and Courter, and at the same time they displaced the old officials of the road and substituted Erie men.

At the same time Ramsey was moving toward this party on a train from Albany armed with an order from the judge in that city forbidding sheriffs to interfere in putting Fisk and Courter in possession.

At Afton, thirty miles from Binghamton, the advancing Fisk party received a despatch from Van Valkenburg, the valiant warrior who had thrown their leader down the stairs, notifying them that any further advance would be at their peril. But after some hesitation the Erie party continued on their way. It was now deep in the night, and their train moved slowly and cautious-

ly toward Bainbridge, where the Ramsey party was waiting.

Ramsey's men lay on a siding with a patent frog, a little machine made to slide trains onto the rails, but equally calculated to slide them off. This frog was attached at a convenient point to the main track.

Derailed the Erie Party's Engine.

In ignorance of this bit of strategy the Erie people felt their way along. At last, to their great relief, Bainbridge seemed safely reached, but in that moment their locomotive gently and suddenly glided off the track and their train was brought to a standstill.

At the same instant the train from Albany moved up the siding, passed triumphantly by its disabled opponents and onto the main track above them, where it took its position in their rear, effectually cutting off all retreat. For the Erie men to go on was equally futile, for as they tumbled out of their train they were served with an order from the Albany court restraining them from doing anything in aid of the receivers appointed in New York City.

The Ramsey party moved cheerfully onward through the night, displacing on their way the recently appointed Fisk men and replacing the ejected Ramsey men in charge of the various stations.

Everything proceeded well until their train approached the long tunnel near Binghamton. This was the battle-ground chosen by the Erie party. Here, close to their base of operations and their supplies, they had massed their reserves after the capture of their advance guard. On the other side of the hill trains were bringing up workmen from the Erie shops under the officers of the Erie road. Most of them were armed with sticks. Before long the Erie party had grown to eight hundred men, while their opponents numbered only four hundred and fifty.

Sure that they were the stronger force, the Erie men decided on an advance, and a train well loaded with combatants was sent forward. The Ramsey train started forward at the same time.

The first intimation the Erie raiders had of danger was the discovery on rounding a sharp curve, of an approaching locomotive, puffing angrily up the grade and evidently bent on mischief. The Erie whistle at once signaled danger. The Albany locomotive replied by signaling them to get out of the way.

The Erie conductor jumped off his train and waved his arms frantically. The Erie engineer tried to back out of the way. He failed. The Albany people wanted a collision, and they had it. The engines came together with a sharp shock, and the attacking locomotive was thrown from the track, though nobody was hurt.

The collision of engines was the signal for a collision of men. But the Erie party had already lost their nerve. The shock of seeing the Albany locomotive bearing down upon them was too much. After a few shots were fired in the darkness, they broke and ran, disappearing into the hills.

This was by no means the end of the struggle for the control of the Susquehanna, however. The Erie party continued the fight in the courts for many months afterward. In this subsequent legal warfare they were beaten at almost every turn.

They might have kept on appealing from various decisions for years, but in 1870 the Ramsey party leased the Susquehanna to the Hudson and Delaware Canal Company. This arrangement transferred the struggle from the comparatively weak shoulders of the railroad itself to a powerful corporation with which the Erie managers could not afford to quarrel.

Such methods as were employed in this struggle between the Erie and the Susquehanna belonged absolutely to the past. Imagine a train deliberately charging upon another nowadays!

McLeod Dared Invade New England.

If A. A. McLeod, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, had been born a generation earlier he might have resorted to the employment of an armed force when in 1892 he attempted that rash enterprise, the invasion of New England.

A monument to this amazingly bold effort to enter the sacred domain of the solidly entrenched New Haven road, the great Poughkeepsie Bridge across the Hudson River, stands to-day an almost forgotten link in the system that was to connect McLeod's New Jersey railroads with the Boston and Maine. If McLeod had succeeded in this plan he would have become one of the greatest railroad financiers of the century. He did not succeed. But he was a prince of dreamers. Surely he deserved a better fate.

Early in the year 1892 the shares of the New York and New England and of the Boston and Maine railroads began to advance mysteriously. McLeod had begun his invasion. In less than six months the fact that he had won control of both roads was revealed when he was elected to the presidency of each.

Wall Street was bewildered. Here was an almost unknown man, with little capital of his own and not a single big banking-house behind him who seemed to be about to found a vast railroad empire. How he had managed to go as far as he had with only the Reading road behind him was a mystery, for in those days the Reading did not occupy a strong financial position.

The Poughkeepsie Bridge, a mammoth engineering undertaking for that day, was swung across the Hudson, and McLeod and his associates hastened to buy rights-of-way through Connecticut and Massachusetts. Meanwhile the New Haven road, rudely disturbed in its lair, was not sleeping. All went well with the McLeod agents until they reached a point a few miles north of Farmington, Connecticut, where they found the route of their road blocked.

They found it impossible to acquire rights of way across a farm which was only two hundred feet wide. The owner was obdurate. Nothing could budge him. And under the laws of Connecticut it was impossible to bring condemnation proceedings.

The failure of the McLeod party's efforts to cross this farm threatened the whole vast enterprise with ruin. Possibly some other route might have been found practicable, but about the same time the project began to go to pieces in other directions, too. In February, 1893, the Reading road suddenly went into bankruptcy.

Then the surprising discovery was made that McLeod had been operating on a shoestring in his effort to divide control of New England with the richest railroad corporation in the country. It was a case of speculation on margin, and the margin had been wiped out. Of all desperate undertakings in the annals of railroad warfare, this romantic adventure of an ill-fated David with Goliath is surely the boldest.

AT MILE-POST EIGHTY-SEVEN.

BY CHARLES W. TYLER.

The Unconsidered Flaw in Black Jack's Hold-Up Plans, and the Dire Results That Came of It.

WALLED by towering, flexed, and tilted rock of Dame Nature's sculpturing, Crater Slide, steel-shod by man in his conquest of the Rockies, had dimmed into the great, black veil of a night in early fall. A full moon crept slowly into the star-flecked radiance of the heavens, while in its arching course of splendor it shot the high-flung, snow-capped pinnacles above the glittering magnificence of God-touched illumination.

Dwarfed in the cañon-slashed depths of this mountain setting, Larry Gilleen, from the doorway of a track-walker's hut at mile-post eighty-seven, watched the play of the distant, shifting shadows.

It was not a night for sleep with this man. The lure of the Great Outdoors was too strong for him. It was enough to sit, the solitary spectator of the majestic scene, and drift with deep and silent thought from things that had passed to things existing; then—things that might have been.

Nestling in the mountain's bosom far down the western slope of the Mountain Division, Crater Slide felt little of the chill from the snow and ice some two thousand feet above. The air was clear, clean, crisp, but not cold. The man breathed deeply of the pure fragrance of it; then coughed, a short, racking hack.

He dropped on a bench just outside the weather-beaten, boxlike structure, while his head tilted wearily back to rest against the time-seasoned and storm-browned boarding.

For a time no sound disturbed the vast quiet. The rising moon moved higher, as it mounted up from behind the white-fringed eastern rim of the mountains and swung its mellow beams far down into the blackened recesses, there to drive the shadows back; while the lurking gnomes of gloom, from a thousand nooks and crannies, shifted and countered as they fought to hold the light-god's legions at bay.

An occasional fragment of fire, dislodged from some distant planet, shot across the upper-world's mighty interspace toward an infinite unknown. The night-wind came whispering up from the west and fanned the cheek of Larry Gilleen. And on this wafted freshness the faint, drumming reverberations of a train, double-heading the west slope, floated to him from the Still-water country below.

It was No. 8, the Continental Express, fighting east up to the Divide some forty minutes late.

The man at the track-walker's hut listened thoughtfully to the steady beat of this new note which rippled through the night's silence. The sound contained no special significance for him; and yet vaguely there was something unaccountably wrong in the order of things.

What was it? His mind groped mechanically for a moment; then it flashed upon him. It was the silence of the old, boxlike main-line instrument within. Squaw Hill had not OS'd the express past this station in the mesa land!

Before Gilleen's brain had adjusted itself to this unusual circumstance, the tongue of the instrument gave forth a slight "pick" as the armature dropped away from the core of the coils. Following the opening of the wire, there came one or two hesitant stammers.

A moment later the relay-set began chattering a call, which flowed through this combination key-relay-sounder with a dull, tinny note peculiar to its kind.

" Ds—ds—ds—ds—" rattled over the wire.

It was the despatcher's call at headquarters in Castle Rock. The person; however, who used the circuit did not " sine."

Listening, Gilleen caught the second trick man's answering: " I—I, ds."

" Where is No. 8 (dn)—?" demanded the voice of the wire.

" Min.," (Wait a minute) snapped Castle Rock. The wire closed and the despatcher then shot a string of terse, impatient calls at Squaw Hill. Some moments later this station came in and reported the Continental by, and the time.

" Get it?" barked headquarters.

" I—I," clicked the anonymous inquirer. And the wire was still.

Two apparently trivial circumstances, which seemingly escaped the harassed despatcher at Castle Rock, strangely enough caught the attention of Larry Gilleen this night, up at mile-post eighty-seven.

First, the previously questioning operator gave no station " sine," which, after all, in the course of events was little enough, and of no special consequence. Second, a slight peculiarity in the formation of the sender's " Morse " interrogation mark.

It was only a little thing; yet, in the passing of many lonely days and nights, Gilleen never remembered having heard this same unusual formation of characters from the O R T men of the Great Southern's Mountain Division.

But more perplexing still was the strange fact that this man's " touch " conveyed something vague, yet undefinably familiar. Some bewildering individuality about it seemed to delve far into a time-dimmed yesterday.

Where, in the years that were gone, had he heard that particular, hesitant manner of chopping out the telegrapher's interrogation?

A dash, two dots, dash dot. The punctuation may be formed by the coalition of T and Q, or D and N of the Morse code. Running either of these two-lettered combinations in close conjunction will produce the Morse man's interrogative.

This hand which played on the key of some station in the mountains left a trailing wake of reminiscence because of the fact of the slightest of pauses between the first dash and the succeeding two dots, and between these two dots and the concluding dash dot—a break so slight that the untrained ear would have failed utterly to catch it at all.

The unidentified sender's interrogation gave the sound of " T-I-N " distinctly. And it was these fractionary instants of hesitancy in the Mores characterization of this symbol that touched a chord of memory in the brain of Larry Gilleen, who, watching the night shadows play up on the mountain's breasting swell of loftiness at Crater Slide, drifted back on the tide of past recollections to the things of his life that had been.

All his life had been a fight. From a gray and littered messenger-lobby at 28 Doane Street, with its perpetual, blue-uniformed M D M " trotter " forever slouching out and in, he had fought his way to a " sine " on the fifth floor of the old Western Union main at 109, where the shrill, metallic voices of the world are never still—from a lounging, world-wise trooper of the streets to a " fast-wire " man on " A " New York.

And then, like many another of the " commercial men " who have stuck too long to the tense, nerve-destroying strain concurrent with the tension of better than " one " every minute—of the " brain-storm " circuits—his health failed him. The grim and relentless white plague had laid its touch upon him; and he was done with the " big-town " duplex trunk lines for all time. He hung on to the " woods " wires for a little; then dropped from the main altogether.

Later the West claimed him, as he began drifting on that unending tide of despairing humanity, who, when it is all too late, would sell their very souls to feel again the pure, health-blood of men coursing through their veins. He had wandered to Livingston; then Castle Rock.

Out on the Mountain Division the pulsating, smoke-grimed life of the railroad game caught him, and he felt more strongly than ever the great lure of life, as the desperate longing seized him to play a real part with these vigorous men who bent their shoulders to the forging of the perpetual iron link of commerce.

For a time he had held down a trick at the busy little railroad town of Helper; but the confinement, even there, was too great.

Clutching desperately at every straw conceived of the medical mind, he was advised to live entirely out of doors; and higher on the slope. He grasped hungrily

the chance to breathe the mountain air every hour of the twenty-four.

Toward this end he made application; and his request was honored. Larry Gilleen, one time known to many an old knight of the key back on Broadway and State Street, became a track-walker at Crater Slide.

His life was all behind him. Only a dull, indefinite void was ahead. To him there appeared to be only a slow, torturing passing down that road which has no returning.

During the first lonely days in the Rockies, his mind dwelt much on the past. For there, as in most men's lives, was a woman. And the memory of her was enshrined in his heart.

When his health had failed him she had promptly broken their engagement, although not entirely of her own accord. Later, he learned that she had become Mrs. Furthman, of Winthrop. However, she was still of his dreams — those forlorn dreams which wandering, broken mankind all over the face of the earth have cherished somewhere deep down in their beings, at one time or another, for the one woman who might have been.

For three years Larry Gilleen lived the life of the wild. His face became bronzed of wind and sunshine; his eyes brightened; and his step was more firm. The dry hack of the cough still hung tenaciously; but it came less frequently. Freight crews brought his supplies; train crews of hurrying fliers waved daily greetings and shied newspapers at his hut. The section men and Western Union "trouble-hunters" were the only fellow men he ever really came in contact with.

For he never left the slide.

"Send me out some books and connect a main-line set with one hundred and eight, if you will, so I can kind of keep in touch with things," he had written Holden, "and I'll stay here and fight it out alone—up in God's country—whether it's win or lose."

"And he's living with the memory of some woman tucked away inside of him—a woman who turned him down when the 'con' got 'im, back East," was the super's burst of confidence.

And it was all that had ever been said.

Larry Gilleen became a fixture at Crater Slide. By day he patrolled painstakingly and faithfully this treacherous stretch of track, which dives in a wicked, sweeping arc between the masses of lined and seamed slide rock—three miles east and two miles west of mile-post eighty-seven. By night he watched the shadows smear the mountains with their inky and fantastic shapes, while his thoughts trailed dreamily backward to linger on seemingly lost hopes and ambitions till sleep swept him away on its flooding ebb of tranquillity.

And then—in the crisp beginning of this night, there had come murmuring out of the blackness, come whispering in the tongue of the old "Morse," a fragmentary bit of something familiar. A "touch" that sharpened his memory, and brought back more strongly the remembrance of things that were gone.

But what *had* there been about this particular individuality that left its print so surely in his brain?

For a long time the man sat thinking with deep concentration; raking his past for some definite acknowledging link that would complete the identification of this thing which came flashing over these long, saggy strands of iron and copper that defy distances and waste places.

Suddenly, in an all illuminating moment of recollection, it came to him.

He gave a start, jerked himself erect—and paused. The relay set was pattering with terse, spasmodic abruptness. Flooding in the wake of the disturbing developments that had been surging through his brain, there, now, descended an entirely new equivalent.

Another strange touch was echoing from train-wire No. 108 of the Mountain Division. Springing unexpectedly from a mysterious nowhere, it thumped crude and jerky characters quite foreign to those that would have been produced by the practise-trained fingers of the ordinary telegrapher. This sender bunched his dots and dragged the dashes—all in heavy, uneven "Morse."

"X," it called once; hesitated, then repeated: "X."

The already deep perplexity which troubled the mind of Larry Gilleen became enhanced twofold. There was no call or "sine" of X on the division. But an instant later an answer went flashing through: "I I—X—? (T-I-N)."

It was the touch of the first strange operator.

The man at mile-post eighty-seven was at once all alert. He leaned over the instrument and listened with rigid intentness.

There was a short interval of silence before the armature of the instrument again became active.

" Dn (?) 8," it rapped.

It was evidently an inquiry concerning the Continental.

" Cmg," snapped the answer.

A moment later the relay chattered once more.

" OS, No. 8 by 9.06, MA."

It was Malta then. Malta, perched on its squat tableland four miles to the west, from whence came the strange and yet familiar touch which had first caught his attention.

The man who flashed this train report was he who habitually formed his interrogations as though he were spelling " T-I-N." And this man had, at one time, worked a trick at Bellingham, a way station back East. It was here that Larry Gilleen—dropped because of ill health from the fast wires to the " wood " circuits — " sitting in " at the " main " end, had first caught the peculiarity of this particular sender.

Later there had been the great Bellingham robbery, in which a well organized gang of most workmanlike " soup " artists had invaded the town and systematically blown the safes in the Bellingham Post Office and People's Savings Bank, cleaned up in both places, and made a clean getaway.

Their escape had been accomplished because of the fact that the night man at the central office of the telephone company had been securely tied up while all the phone wires had been cunningly severed below the switchboard. And the telegraph operator at the station had secretly " killed " every telegraph message intended to head off the outlaws.

After this bit of strategy he had " pulled the pin " and complete gotten away to join the gang before the dazed authorities had discovered the hoax.

The press had afterward pointed to the probability of this latter individual evidently having laid the wires and engineered the entire job.

And to-night the brains of this daring bit of lawlessness—the man, later known as " Morse " Elston, who once worked with Gilleen on a New England way wire, was at the key again, and in Malta, huddled on its table-land on the west slope of the Rockies.

This much the man in the track-walker's hut was sure of. But *who* and *where* was the second strange operator?

The mind of the old " fast-wire " man was playing rapidly over the enigmatical materialization of events, when his attention was again attracted by the activity of the instrument before him.

It was the terse abbreviations of the Morse. And it was evidently an order from the unsteady hand of the unknown who, it seemed, must be working somewhere to the east.

" Gnd w." (Ground west).

Instantly it was followed by a weak " click," as the armature of his instrument dropped away from the coils as the magnetism of the energized cores released it to the tension of the adjustment spring. The wire was open.

Then, even as Larry Gilleen pondered the perplexity of this thing, the wire closed and the set manifested the completion of the ground with an acknowledging: " I I—X."

Castle Rock could now only work with Malta and intermediate stations. Everything east of this station was cut off from headquarters. The circuit was not interrupted; but separated. It became two units instead of one.

The man who first had ordered the ground was still unsatisfied.

" Did u gnd ey wire?" (Did you ground every wire?) jerked through in slow but crisp interrogation, as of one who must feel the assurance of double certainty.

The answer was only an impatient and affirmative: " I I."

And once more the wire closed and was still.

" Everything grounded west of Malta," muttered the man in the track-walker's hut. He frowned, his lids narrowed, and his eyes wandered thoughtfully out and down into the gloom of the fathomless lower cañon.

" What in the name of Heaven kind of game is getting pulled off up here tonight?" he growled at length.

A moment later he shrugged his shoulders, with half contempt for his own mistrust; laughed harshly to himself, and sniffed contemptuously: " This confounded solitude is making a regular old woman out of me!"

On more deliberate second thought he felt that his first hasty conjecture might easily prove all wrong; and that it was quite likely only some boomer subbing for the regular man at Malta. And, again, the

concluding suspicion could quite naturally have been caused by some "trouble-hunter" testing for a failure.

However, even as he attempted to reassure himself, the touch of the man at this latter office haunted him with a vague and subtle persistence which he could not shake off. The very individuality of it was like a long forgotten voice—a voice brought to ear and recognized after the passing of many years.

And so he continued to grope with intolerant, yet insistent perplexity for some self-conceived interpretation—an interpretation which failed utterly to bring any explanation that might alleviate his earlier suspicions. In fact he became more and more engulfed in a dark and foreboding sea of premonition concerning impending evil.

He was on the point of calling Malta and asking "Wo?" when there abruptly flashed before him the remembrance of a thing, that in the general summing up, had momentarily escaped his mind—a clause of the night's events unanswerable.

It was the mysterious "sine" of the X.

His review of the matter was again shattered by the presentation of this undeniably strange occurrence, while his attention was suddenly caught by a bold and penetrating eye of white which shot into view from around the swelling breast of Dome Rock. It was the headlight on No. 8's big helper engine.

The dot of brightness gleamed for an instant on the tangent; then straightened past the curve and shot its shimmering beams far ahead through the wall of night which cloaked this deep-buried gorge of the mountains. A moment he watched the diverging rays fleck and outline weird and fantastic rock formations, silver the strands of arching steel, flare up against the mountain's face—and all, flashing, dancing, passing as swiftly as the winking of an eye.

Then something else — something ugly and sinister, for one fleeting instant, was blazed across his line of vision. Up to the east of mile-post eighty-seven — up where the frowning mountain walls narrowed till it seemed that there was scarcely clearance for the cars, was the Mountain Division's famous Portal Gap.

And now the yawning mouth of Portal Gap was choked by an enormous gray rock!

While to the west, following swiftly in the wake of the light's first far-reaching advance—and so close!—came the pulsating, staccato bark of the exhausts, which, snorting from the stacks of the two great Baldwins, ripped in echoing thunder through the silence that had veiled the place, and in far-flung exhaustion dimmed and passed on up the slope to murmur and die in the crag-lined palm of Little Boy Cañon.

Thus the coming of the Continental Express.

Nearly an hour behind her time-card running, No. 8 lunged savagely down onto the sweeping arc of Crater Slide.

To the east a red fusee suddenly flared from the shadow of a projecting rock to the center of the track, where it sputtered, blinked; then glared forth with a dull, red effervescence, as it shed its crimson glow out into the night.

As of a great field manager's command, two short, answering yelps shrilled from the dome of the leading engine.

And the stage was set.

The moon, the mountains, the gleaming peaks above, a mighty transcontinental flier charging onto the screen with tight-grasped rims spitting streams of fire, a massive boulder of slide rock threatening in sullen silence on the right-of-way close ahead, a danger signal casting its red and mocking brightness as of some sheltering pretense of lurking things beyond, a hut nestling unseen in the shadows below, a man tense and gray in its door—it was all there. All set for the next prompting of the hand invisible.

And even as the heavy train still surged —but more slowly now—toward that danger mark ahead; even in the swift passing of numbered seconds, the sinister plot of the piece—with the light of complete understanding—became clear, in its narrowing transparency, to Larry Gilleen.

There had been the touch of the outlaw telegrapher at Malta, west of him; the strange, jerky sender somewhere east; the interrogation concerning No. 8; the grounding of the wires west—and in all probability those east; thus severing the last, connecting link of communication between Crater Slide and the outside world—the barricade in Portal Gap; the red signal now displayed—he saw it all.

The Continental Express was boxed in a deep-gorged rift — boxed tight in this ravine of the Rockies. She was completely at the mercy, for aught any resistance her trainmen might offer, of those desperate

and skilled workmen of crime who had planned the play — outlaws of the mountains. Desperadoes who now, safe from molestation, might loot mail, baggage, the big express safe and passengers; then make a clean get-away long before help could be summoned.

The one unreckoned and silent spectator of it all watched No. 8, buckling, straining, protesting, against the momentum of her pace, slowing past him; he watched the misty, red haze lift lazily upward from the glaring center of the fusee, as, with mellow, crimson illumination, it flung tinted light onto the massive gray-rock walls of the cut; he saw the deepening of the sinister shadows beyond the radius of the reddening rays—it was all before him; it all gripped him with compelling fascination.

The great locomotives slid over and smothered the challenging light, while it flickered and glowed beneath their black and steam-fringed bellies, as they ground to a reluctant stop less than a half a car-length from the thing that menaced in Portal Gap.

Instantly as the train came to a standstill, the air was shattered by a startling volley of small arms, which spat wicked jets of fire from a half a dozen points along the right-of-way — evidently as an intimidating warning to all.

Gilleen started involuntarily, swore shortly and turned toward the interior of the hut.

"And *I*, the guardian of things at mile-post eighty-seven—the watchman of Crater Slide—let 'em get away with it. Let those hell-hounds pull this old, time-worn stuff right under my very nose! Bah!" His disgust was infinite and wholly unexpressible.

Then, as though of a reminder of his own vested weakness, the cough again racked his being. He choked it off with an oath, and fumbled through the darkness within.

Seldom is defense so complete that it does not contain, somewhere in its assemblization, a point that time may develop into a tiny flaw; and ofttimes of which, if not discovered and remedied, the whole stronghold may later mark as the source of its subversion.

When Black Jack of the Shoshones—of Black Horse Cañon fame — and Morse Elston, of Bellingham prominence, got together in the "Hole" and laid down the details of the hold-up at mile-post eighty-seven, they had apparently left no point unexamined and covered.

Grounding the wires east and west of the Slide would so interrupt communication that all movement of trains in the immediate vicinity would be held up until a train wire showed working through.

In the meantime the outlaw at Malta would occasionally lift the ground west and report "testing—all wires in trouble east"; thus temporarily causing confusion at Castle Rock and covering the fact that No. 8 was unreported at Portal long after she was due "by" this OS station.

But even Morse Elston, versed in the ways of the telegraph game, overlooked one bet. Forgot. Entirely let it pass clear and unchallenged of the most carefully laid and cunningly conceived plans for a gigantic hold-up.

Perhaps because of the very simplicity of the thing.

And it was the key-thread—the loose-end unnoticed in the interwoven fabric of the play.

Now it was before the mind's eye of Larry Gilleen, while every second contained an untold value; for much depended on him. His delineation of the counter-plot was complete; his movements were quick but guarded. The deep, racking cough, against which he had been grimly fighting, irritated and frightfully recurrent coincident with this sudden, grim, bold play of train robbers, strained and weakened him almost to a point of exhaustion.

But with the same indomitable will with which he had been fighting it for three years at mile-post eighty-seven, he now fought down the terrifying weakness resultant of it.

He hurriedly disconnected the wires from the binding posts of his main-line set; then twisted the two loose ends together that the circuit might not be interrupted. Feeling along a bit of studding, his fingers closed upon an old pair of lineman's pliers, also a U-shaped wrecking clamp which a Western Union "trouble-hunter" had left behind. Both he jammed into his pocket.

Again he struggled with the spasmodic convulsions which centered in his lungs; then steadying himself, he gathered together a small, left-over coil of instrument wire, the .44 which Holden had sent up, and a handful of cartridges, and slipped out into the night.

Except for the dim train-lights and the red-green markers everything was in darkness on No. 8. Occasionally the sound of voices came to him as he worked his way carefully along in the shadows.

Once a trainman's lantern twinkled for a moment on the steps of an open vestibule, but instantly a jet of fire punctuated by the sharp report of an automatic shattered the night, while the figure with the lantern lurched toward the earth.

That was all.

Gilleen gasped at the grimness of it, while with great difficulty he continued cautiously to work slowly up and along the rock side of the cut until he was almost above the varnished cars of the Continental.

At a point where a steel, bracket-like angle bar supported the telegraph wires, as they sagged along close to the steep, sloping mountain face, he paused, choking, gasping; a thin red line showing at the corners of his colorless lips, while he fought for breath.

As his strength came back he studied the strands of wire just above him. Some were galvanized threads of iron; others reddish-hued streaks of copper. He was dizzy and they blurred for a moment. He clung desperately to the L-shaped steel support to which the two wooden cross arms were bolted.

Eight wires were tied to the glass insulators on the top arm; six on the lower.

"Number twelve," he muttered slowly; "number twelve. Western Union—trunk line—Chicago-San Francisco duplex—copper all the way. Number twelve. Yes; it comes through here—'lower arm inside' I think I heard Mack say. And the only boards it is cut through on the Mountain Division are at *Livingston, Castle Rock and the repeating station at Ashland.*"

It was with considerable difficulty that he finally succeeded in adjusting the crescent-shaped clamp to the trunk circuit on the lower arm, while locking it there by means of its heavy thumb-screws. A moment he rested, breathing heavily and with pain; then connected the instrument wire to the small screw connections of the wrecking clamp.

A few seconds later, after twisting the opposite bared ends to the posts of the instrument and tightening the thumb-nuts, the sensitive, main-line set was ready.

He opened the small switch on the flat side of the clamp; then cut the heavy wire of copper number twelve between the two rounding forks of the bit of steel — and Larry Gilleen, crouching on the rocky side of Portal Gap, was ready to spring into communication with distant cities of the outside world.

He was now cut in on the Western Union, Chicago-San Francisco duplex circuit.

And even as he struggled to choke down and smother another soul-racking spasm of the terrible, gripping hack of the cough, he snapped open the instrument switch, pounded a terse "BK" (Break), and several "I I I's" as he adjusted; then jerked a hurried: "Sf—Sf— Ch—Ch—"

The city on the lake, and the city of the Golden Gate both caught it; and each answered. "Ch—" "Sf—"

San Francisco and Chicago — two thousand miles apart—were listening. Also, Ashland the repeating station was "in" now.

Then swift and clean flowed the Morse:

> Hold-up. No. 8 at m-p 87. G S—Mtn Div. Nfy Castle Rock and Livingston. Snd help qk. (Sgd) GILLEEN.

In far-flung understanding flashed the answering "I I's."

And instantly across the bleak, snow-capped blue of mountain range, across the dry and arid flat wastes of the desert—all across the distances, in flashing defiance of the miles, the intermittent *make* and *break* of the telegraph rocked the armature—the metallic tongue of time-annihilating Morse —in wide-sent communication of men and places.

The despatcher's office at Castle Rock flared into wild and frantic activity; terminal headquarters at Livingston fluttered with ill-concealed excitement. While both stations immediately plugged their local sets in on the commercial wire.

"Eighty - seven — Eighty - seven, Cr," snapped Castle Rock.

There was a pause of several moments; then: "I I," rapped Crater Slide in answer. And continued:

> No. 8 in hands of outlaws between m-p 87 and 1st ledge. Come in easy fm east; Portal Gap blocked. Watch Malta; 2nd trick is Morse Elston, outlaw, covering.
>
> GILLEEN.

Just six minutes later, Castle Rock again flashed a message for the man at mile-post eighty-seven. The wheels of the swift and

trained emergency accomplishment of the railroad game were in mesh. Said headquarters:

> Eighty-seven. Got men cmg — east fm Squaw Hill; west fm Antlers. Hw nw? (How is every thing now?)

Crater Slide, however, did not answer this. And for that matter Crater Slide did not answer at all; for with his jaw square-set, his lips straight and close, while with a strange, ugly light in his eyes, Larry Gilleen, the long, blued barrel of the heavy caliber revolver resting across a bit of projecting rock, was hurling screaming, hot-lead messages down at the dark figures beside the Continental Express.

Below, all was suddenly confusion for the moment. Then answering flashes began to spit their ugly reply from the close-shooting automatics of the outlaws.

Gilleen paused an instant, cursing under his breath and half unconsciously to himself.

"I never could shoot straight with these blasted old army kickers!" he muttered as he jammed out the empty shells and substituted new ones.

The peculiar and sinister *ping!* of bullets whined monotonously over him. The men at the side of No. 8 were shooting a little high. Gilleen edged a bit lower and crowded close to the uneven yet unprotecting surface of the steep-sloping rock; working almost flat on his stomach.

All the fierce blood-lust of the man in battle was upon him. To kill, that was all. He held and better timed his fire. Once only did the cough grip his being. He became possessed of strength and stamina he had not dreamed of. He fought as he had fought all his life—with grit, determination, and utter contempt for all opposition; even of death.

He drew and held the fire of Black Jack's gunmen without flinching, while their bullets snapped and spattered against the rock all about him.

Once that grim, sickening shock of lead gone home caught him, as a strange, painless numbness crept through his right shoulder. The controlling power of his hand on that side seemed to ooze from his finger-tips. It dazed him for a moment; then he caught the big .44 in his left hand just before it dropped from his grasp entirely.

It was with the utmost difficulty that he worked out the empty shells now, while with the gun caught between his knees he fed in unused ones.

Something burned and seared at the side of his temple before he could again flatten to the rock, while a bit of warm, wet moisture crept down the side of his face.

"Aw, Gawd, help me!" he muttered. "Gawd help me keep 'em—hold 'em here—till the boys come! Help me make it th' last stand of these dirty, murderin' hounds—th' last trick they ever pull on the old Mountain Division. Please help me this once—*amen!*"

And he punctuated the last word with a close-aimed shot that sent a crawling creature, who had tried to creep up on him, staggeringly erect, with arms flung outward before the face, only to reel and crash to the ground.

And then—charging, swaying, thundering from the west—came "Big" Kergan swinging into the setting; came the great black, iron monster of the No. 2636, the latest superheating thing for fast-freight work. It was No. 18's "high-ball" freight engine, snatched from its train at Squaw Hill. And her tender, pilot, and running-board were alive with hastily gathered and armed men.

"Running light" she swept down into Crater Slide like a mighty, fire-tinged thunderbolt. And no sound that shattered the moon-touched night at mile-post eighty-seven ever could have brought the Heaven-sent prayers of thanksgiving that did the wild, shrieking wail of her whistle, as Big Kergan's eyes caught his first, far-reaching glimpse of the Continental's glimmering, red tail-lights.

Then also came a mountain passenger-hauler "running light" from the east. She, too, brought her quota of armed men, as she ground to a stop just beyond the gray-rock obstruction which choked the time-sculptured, buttresslike walls of Portal Gap.

And Black Jack of the Shoshones, boxed tight in a mountain trap conceived by his own wicked brain, surprised, outwitted, was at last at bay—outnumbered, overwhelmed; conquered for all time by the lone hand of the man whose solitary beat had covered the wild, black ruggedness of mile-post eight-seven—three miles east; two miles west.

Only one dim, soft-shaded light was visible in the whole great, gray-green house

of the red-tiled roof, which loomed through the moonlight against the low-arched highlands of Winthrop. It was in a corner room of the lower floor.

A small mantel clock, above the modern, massive-type open-grate, steadily ticked the seconds away, while the heavy silence of the place gave distinct note to the monotonous chant of the timepiece.

Through the long, mullioned, half-open windows came the never-tiring pound and wash of the surf from the cliffs below. The curtains moved to and fro with bellying sluggishness as the east wind's breath, toying with all things frail, wandered softly in the night.

Except for the moon and the dim-shaded lamp, no medium of lumination haunted the room; except for the clock and the surf, no other medium of sound reached within.

Then—suddenly breaking in upon the restful quietude—came the shrill, metallic call of the telephone. It ripped the silence with impertinent insistence until a woman, soft-robed and unseen, rose quietly from somewhere beyond the light's rays, moved toward the eastern window's bay, and raised the instrument from its stand beside the restless curtains.

"Winthrop, 1096?" rasped the terse voice of the inquirer, in brisk interrogative.

The answering voice of the woman was low, soft—tired:

"Yes; 1096."

"Western Union! A telegram for Mrs. Annette Furthman."

"I am she. You may read it."

"It is dated, 'Crater Slide, the Great Southern's Mountain Division—'"

A frown of perplexity creased and deepened the furrows between the eyes of the woman—then suddenly an intuitive premonition swept through her mind; her face went deathly white.

The voice at the far end of the wire continued its cold, unemotional monotone:

". . . body of the message reads:

"Larry Gilleen is crossing the Great Divide at mile-post eighty-seven. As guardian of the division's right-of-way at this point, he chose to put his back to the rock-wall of Portal Gap and fight for the safety of lives and property of men and women on our Continental Express. And so, went down fighting—alone. A man. He closes his life with the thought of a woman—*Nan*—and sends his love."

The voice concluded: "It is signed, 'Holden, Superintendent of the Mountain Division.'"

Big-hearted George Holden, with the secret of Larry Gilleen's broken dream still before him, had directed the wording of that message from the despatcher's office at Castle Rock. And again the far-reaching powers of man and "Morse" had spanned the distances. Chicago caught it and in turn flashed it into the "main" at Boston.

In the great house on the hill the woman stood with her face turned out toward the black waters of Massachusetts Bay. Her hands were pressed convulsively against her breast; her breath came in quick, choky, indrawn gasps—"Larry Gilleen!"

Of things visible she saw not; of sounds she was unconscious.

The moon, with all the full-rounded yellowness of its harvest glory—the same mighty satellite which even now swept its rays full down into the blood-touched depths of Crater Slide—swinging high in its ascendency up toward its zenith in the heavens, shot a wondrous path of gold across the bay; the low Nahant peninsula, dotted by winking lights, stretched defiantly far out from the mainland; the perpetual, flaring flash of the silent "Graves," with its unceasing "two—two," blazed and died—blazed and died close to the distant horizon; shimmering dots of white at the left marked the sweeping curve of the mighty Crescent Beach—all added to the night-dimmed radiance of the scene.

And yet to these things this woman gave no eye.

For now, close past twelve, as earlier that night, only one torturing remembrance—only the fact that four years ago tonight, with the same moon-path glimmering across the water before them, she had broken her engagement with the man who, this hour, was entering the Great Beyond.

The thing gripped her very soul.

"Oh, God, forgive me!" The words broke through her lips in quick, quivering sentences. "Because he was sick, I weakened—forsook him—"

Then, as though in desperate conclusion of her own heart-torn confession, she plunged on. "I—I married of *their* choosing: money, position—I had it all. But—oh, all through the years, how I wanted *him*—wanted to see him again—wanted

love! Love—and the happiness which wealth did not bring."

She paused. A new, all-compelling something—a thing unexplainable—gripped her. Still and tense, she stood, while across the miles, deep in Nature's setting on the west slope of the Rockies, the face of the man was flooded by a new light. His eyes swung up toward the moon-touched and glittering snow and ice far above him—and beyond—then closed, as with a great weariness.

"Good—good night—Nan. It—it's all right—all done . . . gone—forgiven. And we—we will meet—again—by and by . . . somewhere—over yonder . . . over there. . . . It's '30' . . . no more now . . . to-night."

And the woman, in the far-off East, was alone with her sorrow.

Her life was suddenly a thing of emptiness, for the last, dim hope of ever again looking into the face of the man, this side of the grave, was gone, while the great, black curtain at Life's end settled quietly, peacefully down between Larry Gilleen and men and things—at mile-post eighty-seven.

BACK ON THE SANTA FE.

BY OWEN HUGH O'NEIL.

OUT from Los Angeles sweeping, gathering speed as we whirl;
Into the desert leaping, where the heat-waves skyward swirl;
The hills—they are far behnid us; level and straight the trail;
Away and away to Barstow, over a shining rail.
Now with a soothing murmur, now with a fitful start,
And my own heart echoes the throbbing of the engine's mighty heart.
That chapter is closed forever; but my thoughts still backward stray
To those days, of my life the sweetest, back on the Santa Fe.

SAY, are the switch-lights blinking as they blinked in the days long dead?
Say, are the signals winking as they change from white to red?
Say, are the same old faces in the same old places to-night?
The same hands guiding the moguls so steadily on their flight?
Dick Warner, my fine old fellow, patient and true and strong—
Does he gaze from the right-hand window at the vista narrow and long?
Do the sands of the desert, flying, his face and his fingers flay,
As he rolls through the old "Mohavvy," back on the Santa Fe?

WALLACE and Baldwin, bravest and best that ever I knew,
Are they pounding over the iron on their way to San Berdoo?
And Redden—they call him "the cyclone," but his heart is as good as gold;
Cool in the face of danger, fearless and ever bold;
An engineer to be proud of—'way up in the three-thousand class—
Swift on the level stretches, safe and sure on the Pass;
When the stars are faintly twinkling, when the morning sky is gray,
Is he swinging them into Barstow, back on the Santa Fe?

STRANGE, how I hear their voices after the lapse of years!
Strange, how I see the faces of those sturdy old engineers!
Strange, how I feel a longing surge up within my soul,
To feel once more the swaying, the slue and the lurch and roll!
To gaze on the lanterns swinging on the road that I call my own,
To feel my way in the darkness down the steeps of the dread Cajon!
That chapter is closed forever, but my thoughts shall always stray
Backward, through time and distance—back to the Santa Fe!

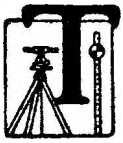
SPECIAL TRAINS AT $2 A MILE.

Railroad Charges as Much as If the Equipment Were to Haul 100 Day-Coach Passengers, Plus 40 Persons in the Pullman.

HAVE BROKEN MANY SPEED RECORDS.

One Ran from Camden to Atlantic City, 53 Miles, in 43 Minutes—Samuel Newhouse Went from Salt Lake City to Paris in Ten Days—Lillian Russell Had One Every Night to Commute Between Home and Theater.

BY CLAUDE WASHINGTON.



HE Big Business Man jangled the telephone receiver impatiently. Then—

"This the station-superintendent?"

"When does the next train to New York leave?"

"When does it arrive?"

"That won't do. Give me a special."

"I don't care what it costs. I've got to be there by three o'clock."

"I don't care—you've *got* to make it."

"What? Oh, all right. I'll have the cash. Fifteen minutes."

The Big Business Man yelled for a taxi, demanded and received instant cashing for a four-figure check from the hotel clerk who knew him, flung into the car, tossed a bill to the driver which made that khaki-clad individual open his eyes, and cried as he slammed the door:

"Beat it to the station! Never mind the speed-limit. Keep the change and pay your fine with part of it."

The taxi driver "beat it." Thirteen minutes from the time he telephoned the Big Business Man ran through the gates, climbed into the special train which had been hurriedly made up for him, and looked mournfully at the bank-roll, depleted by many dollars of which the stationmaster had relieved him before the "go-ahead" signal had been given.

Five minutes later and the uncomfortable side-to-side motion advised him that an illegal speed was being made over yard-tracks.

"Will you make it?" he asked the conductor, who came in at the moment.

New York to Washington in Four Hours.

"New York in four hours from Washington is pretty fast time, sir. But that's what you paid for, and barring accidents or engine failure we'll land you there in time."

"What makes you so sure?"

"Why, we did it. We did it for J. P. Morgan. As I remember it we pulled out about 11.12 and got into New York at eight minutes after three. We stopped four minutes at West Philadelphia to change engines and three at Manhattan Transfer to get the electric.

"That was a pretty lively run—almost fifty-eight miles an hour. Three hours, fifty-five minutes, and thirty seconds was the total time and the distance is 226.8 miles. If we could do it for him we can for you, I guess."

The Big Business Man tried to look like a J. P. Morgan, and as if he were accustomed to ordering a special train at unheard-of prices every day of his life.

"I suppose you don't have special trains like this every day?" he questioned.

"Not *every* day, but we have our share. The American people are nutty on getting to places in a hurry, and getting there in luxury. If it isn't a special train it's a private car, or a special car, or special freights, or some one has a broken leg and has to get across the continent because the only doctor in the world is three thousand miles away, or some one else has a sick brother and has to get to Paris in nine days from San Francisco, or some one advertises his wealth by skedaddling a few thousand miles in a few hours less than his fellow man. Of course, sir, I know this is business with you, as it is 'most always, but not every time."

"You interest me," commented the Big Business Man. "I wish you'd tell me something about the charges."

"Well, they differ, of course, with different roads and different circumstances," said the conductor, sitting down and looking longingly at the Havana with which the Big Business Man was consoling himself for the loss of his roll. "No, thank you. I'd like to smoke, but it's as much as my job is worth. About the fares—"

"Is this *my* train?" demanded the Big Business Man. "Can I do what I blame please with it?"

"Why—er—of course—yes, sir."

"Then you just smoke that and let the company go hang. Never mind the porter over there; I'll attend to him at the end of the run—if we make it," grimly.

The conductor smiled and accepted the cigar. Soon he too was comfortable.

A Special Usually Costs About $2 a Mile.

"Now about those fares," he began again. "Usually you'll find a special train runs you about two dollars a mile. I suppose you are paying five hundred and nine dollars for the train and fifty for the Pullman—or did they soak you for disarranging freight-traffic and busting the schedule?"

"That's all Greek to me," protested the Big Business Man. "I paid just what you said. Why should I pay any more?"

"Well, you demanded a four-hour schedule. If they had had to delay a couple of freights or put an express on a siding for you you'd have paid for it. As it is they just charged you the regular one-way fare for a hundred people, which is $5.09 each, and the Pullman fares for forty people, the capacity of this car. I suppose you know you could have brought thirty-nine friends in here and sixty in the day-coach ahead without paying any more?"

"What's the day-coach on for at all?"

"Stability and easy riding. Also to get your car away from the engine."

"Well, I don't mind the money if I get there—even though it's quite a bit."

Walter Scott, the Speed-King.

"Saving your presence, Mr. Big Business Man, it isn't a flea-bite compared to what some pay, when they get going. There was a fellow by the name of Scott—Walter Scott he was, too, though I don't suppose he was any relative of the chap who wrote books. This Scott was a miner who struck it rich out West and had more money than he needed.

"He tackled the Santa Fe to put him in Chicago from Los Angeles in two days. They figured up and agreed to make it in forty-eight hours and ten minutes, if he had the price. The price was $5,500. It's 2,246.9 miles, you know.

"This Scott was game and wealthy and he paid over. He had an engine, baggage car, dining-car and Pullman combination. They changed engines at twenty division points, went over eight States and pulled into Chicago in a total elapsed time of forty-four hours and fifty-six minutes. The best previous time was fifty-seven hours and fifty-six minutes. There was fifty-nine minutes dead time in the trip — engine changes, you know — so the running time was forty-three hours fifty-five minutes, or a total average of 51.1 miles per hour.

"But do you think that speed-king was satisfied? No, sir, he wasn't! He went loping about Chicago trying to get some railroad to agree to put him in New York *in thirteen hours!* But there was no one to make the bargain with him."

Specials Must Be Paid For in Advance.

"I suppose he had to pay in advance, didn't he? I did, and I don't know why. I'm reasonably well known, and enjoy, I believe, a good credit," complained the Big Business Man, who as a matter of fact could probably claim to own quite a num-

ber of cars and engines and stretches of road-bed, on account of the railroad stock which inhabited certain safety-deposit vaults in the metropolis.

The conductor chuckled.

"Did that get your goat?" he inquired. "Well, it's an iron-clad rule. People who haven't got the money in hand don't get special trains.

"But the rule is sometimes bent, if not broken. There's Dan Kerfoot, for instance. Dan used to be superintendent of a big terminal in one of the big cities. He is fond of telling about the young chap who was shown in to him one day in a terrible stew. He had to have a special train and he had to have it quick. He had to get fifteen miles away by eleven in the morning, and the only regular train that he could get would arrive at eleven seventeen.

"'That will cost you thirty-one dollars,' said Dan.

"The young man hustled through his clothes, but twenty-two was all he could raise. He offered his check, told Dan they would know his voice over the wire at the bank and certify to him. But there was nothing doing.

"'But, confound it, man, I'm to be *married* at eleven o'clock—church wedding! My clothes, best man, money for my trip, bride—they are all waiting for me. If you don't let me have that special there won't be any wedding. Have a heart, man! I'll pay—'

"'You stop right there!' said Dan, and off he scooted.

"When he came back he had the money in his hand. 'Here,' he said. 'I loan it to you. Now you pay me. Bring her in some day so I can add mine!'

"And the best of it is, Dan says he *did* bring her in, and a sweet and pretty little girl she was, and it turned out he had all kinds of money and wasn't afraid to spend it. They gave Dan a watch."

Any Road Can Make Speed-Records.

"I suppose some of these special trains make great speed-records," remarked the Big Business Man as he smiled at the conductor's little romantic episode. "Know of any?"

"Shucks!" deprecated the conductor. "Speed-records are cheap. Any old road can make them for the asking. You see, sir, the only way you can really compare speed is to have exact statistics as to the kind and size of engine, number of cars, length of track, grade of right-of-way, and so on.

"If road A makes a hundred and two miles in a hundred and four minutes, while road B makes fifty-one miles in fifty-one minutes, road B says it beats road A. But road A may have run three more cars in its train and gone up twenty miles of low grade, while road B made its streak of speed on a level tangent. You can't compare, very well.

"But the specials usually do make speed. I heard a yarn the other day that rather makes the railroad speed-bug look sick. It seems there was an excursion from Denver to Cheyenne, to land a hundred prominent Denver heavyweights at the Frontier Day celebration in Wyoming. Usually it takes trains three hours to make the run from Denver. But this special was scheduled to make it in two hours and fifteen minutes.

Auto Beat Record-Breaking Special.

"They made it all right. They shattered all the Union Pacific records for the hundred and twelve miles, and I heard that they touched eighty an hour for a while, the fastest a train ever went in Colorado.

"But the excitement was that one of the heavyweights from Denver said a train was too *slow* for him—he was going by automobile. So he arranged it in advance and the towns were notified and gave the buzz-wagon the right of way—and in spite of the fact that by road the distance is one hundred and sixteen miles, darned if the gas-buggy didn't beat the special into Cheyenne by two minutes!

"But you couldn't beat this train to New York with all the motors ever invented!" he finished.

The conductor paused and enjoyed a puff or two at his cigar. The porter nodded in the corner. The telegraph poles flew by like a picket fence.

"Don't stop. I didn't know I was hiring entertainment for my near six hundred dollars, but as it's here I want to enjoy it," prodded the Big Business Man. "What was that yarn you mentioned of the man who had to get to Paris in a week from San Francisco?"

"Thank you, sir! I'm glad if you like the yarns," answered the conductor. "'Tisn't often we get a chance to sit down and spin them. That Paris talk was a joke, of course, as I put it. But it had

some facts back of it. It was before the present war, of course.

"It seems that a Mr. Samuel Newhouse, a mine-owner, had to get from Salt Lake City to Paris in a terrible hurry because he had a brother there who was desperately ill. Newhouse caught the Los Angeles Limited, but it was delayed by storms, and when he got to Chicago, the then eighteen-hour New York Limited—the New York Central's Twentieth Century, you know—had left. And that was the only train that would catch the Lusitania!

Salt Lake City to Paris in Ten Days.

"That didn't stop Mr. Newhouse, however. He demanded and got a special train, and paid over a few dollars less than two thousand round ones without blinking—one hundred first-class fares. Well, he got there, and I believe broke all the Chicago-New York records, doing it in something around sixteen hours. Of course, he made his boat, and cabled ahead and had a special waiting at Fishguard, I believe, to get to Dover, and another at Calais to take him to Paris, and he made it in ten whole days, Salt Lake City to Paris, France, which is traveling *some*.

"I've always wanted to know whether the brother got well or not. But that's the worst of these railroad stories. They only get as far as speed, distance and price."

"So they have specials abroad, too, do they?" asked the Big Business Man. "Somehow, I never thought of them doing anything like that anywhere except in America."

The Big Business Man tried not to look too insular and unsophisticated.

"Sure, they have them," the conductor responded. "They do things abroad we wouldn't dream of doing here. If a man wants a special train here he can have it, if he pays for it. But did you ever hear of a special train for a dog in this country? No, I thought not. Well, they have 'em abroad. At least they had one. I rather suspect the conductor of the 'dog special' had a hard time of it with his friends later.

The London to Manchester Dog Special.

"It seems there was a dog-show in Manchester, and a lot of London dogs missed the train because of a London fog. So the road made up a dog special, and fitted seats out as kennels and provided a lunch for each dog, and some 'guards'—that's what they call 'em there—as personal conductors, and landed the dogs in time for their blue-ribbon events.

"I suspect the dogs didn't know the difference, but I bet their owners did when the bill came in. Imagine what forty dogs would do to this upholstery, what with shedding hair and scratching up the velvet!"

"You said something about freight specials," ventured the Big Business Man. "What are they?"

"Oh, yes. Well, of course a railroad will run a special train any time for any one, anywhere, for the money. But when there is an abnormal demand, while it's still a special train in that it is not on the regular schedule, sometimes it becomes in effect simply an extra train for a special purpose.

"For instance, if you have a convention at Atlantic City and propose to take three hundred or five hundred or one hundred men down from New York, you can have your own special train without extra expense. The road would rather have you do that than crowd its regular train.

"So it is with freight. When there are extra large, extra special, extra valuable freight shipments, the road will often make up a special freight rather than risk it all in the regular freights.

Silk Special Crossed U. S. at 40-Mile Speed.

"For instance, one of the cross-continental speed-records is a freight-record. There was two million dollars' worth of silk in Seattle, and it had to get to New York in a hurry. I don't know how or why — Japanese imports, probably, and wanted for spring trade or something like that.

"Anyway, the Great Northern, the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, and the New York Central made a special train out of it and whisked it across the continent in eighty-two and one-quarter hours. As the distance by these roads is 3,178 miles, that means a general average of almost forty miles an hour. Exclude stops and that rate crawls up better than forty. At the time the run was made, it was almost half a day faster than the best regular passenger schedule.

"Then there is the matter of fruit specials. Of course, all the trains made up of nothing but refrigerators are special in a way, because they don't run the year

around. But sometimes they are genuine specials, made up and hurriedly put on to fill a sudden need.

" I remember one time, when there was a fruit famine in Chicago, on account of a cold-storage plant burning up, a wreck of one bunch of cold cars, and another one being delayed by storms. There was a lot of fruit waiting at Sacramento, California, and the Gould lines agreed to put it in Chicago as fast as they would a passenger train. So they made up this string of refrigerators and gave it a passenger schedule.

It started on the Western Pacific and finished on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy—you know that road holds a lot of speed-records. It was eighty-four hours, the time they made, and the distance is something like 2,500 miles.

Ran Fruit Special on Overland Schedule.

" Of course, that isn't as good a record as the silk-special made all the way across, but there's more climbing to be done in the southern route. The fact that a freight-train ran on the regular Overland Limited schedule was considered quite some feat of wheel-turning, and as far as I know it's never been bettered."

" All that is very interesting," observed the Big Business Man, bringing out his cigar-case again. " But I think the special trains which carry people are more so. What's the very fastest time ever made by a special carrying a man in a hurry?"

" I don't believe I'd like to get up in court and swear to any being absolutely the fastest," smiled the conductor, accepting the cigar. " But when they are really after speed-records they turn to the Atlantic City trains. They call it fifty-five and a half miles from Camden to Atlantic City, and there was a special out of there last spring that did the distance in forty-three and a half minutes. It was a congress or something, and some one missed a train, and didn't mind paying a hundred or so for a special. But it isn't the speed-record that concerns us who make the special run half so much as it is making the schedule."

" How's that? I don't understand."

" You see," the conductor explained, " a railroad track is a pretty busy place, especially a track like this, that has not only all the intercity traffic between New York, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, but that carries so much freight and so many through cars going either to the far South or the extreme North.

The Train That " Loses Her time " Is Lost.

" Every train that runs on these tracks except some slow freights has its regular schedule. It has to make that schedule or lose it altogether. Maybe you've been on a train that was several hours late and you couldn't understand why. It was because, somewhere or other, it lost its schedule—got so late (half an hour will do it easily) that it had to side-track and let other trains which were not late get by.

" Well, when a train loses her time she's lost. She just has to wander along at the sweet will and pleasure of the despatcher. He snakes her from station to station as best he can, but she just has to keep out of the way of everything else.

" Now this train you are on has a schedule. It's special, but it's all down on paper. We've got to make West Philadelphia in time to get ahead of the regular New York train if we are going to land you there by three o'clock. And the only way we can do it is to pass her at Philly. She goes in to Broad Street—we change engines at West Philadelphia and run ahead of her. If we don't make it we just come in behind her and you don't get there when you want to.

" So it's keeping up to the schedule and keeping out of the way of other trains that interests us, much more than just clipping a few seconds of the record or making a run so fast that every box on the train has to be doll-babied or maybe taken down and repacked.

" But sometimes speed *is* the great requirement. Never more so than when a newspaper wants it for advertising purposes. We don't care much for newspaper specials because—well—because!"

" Because why?"

" Nothing, sir; I was thinking of something else."

" Go on, man; say! Because why?"

" Well, if you won't think I'm hinting for Jimmy, sitting up ahead there, and little Scotty, swinging a shovel to beat time for you, it's because a newspaper pays for a special and gets it and that's the end of it. Generally when individuals hire a special train, the engineer and fireman come in for something.

" Why, I've heard the man who used to

pull Miss Lillian Russell from her Rockaway home on Long Island to New York tell tales that listened like real money. Miss Russell was never a piker—if you'll excuse the language. She wouldn't ride in a regular train if she could buy a special. She had one six nights a week when she lived there and sang in New York. It cost her fifty dollars a night for her train and they say she used up another fifty on the crew—twenty-five to the engineer, fifteen to the fireman, and ten to the Pullman porter."

The Big Business Man made a mental note.

"But a newspaper don't do things that way," continued the conductor. "Not even when it's a case of advertising. During the last Democratic Convention in Baltimore a New York newspaper had a daily special train to go and come. It's a hundred-and-eighty-four-mile journey and one hundred and seventy-one minutes was the best time, and a mile a minute the regular time, including stops. Of course, the newspaper didn't have to go so fast, but it made good copy for the reporters and I suppose it paid.

"Of course, people hire specials for all sorts of purposes. Advertising is one of them — and pure pleasure is another. There's a story of a contractor in New York who tried to go to New Haven in an automobile for the big game—football, you know; Harvard and Yale. His buzz-wagon broke down — engine failure, most probably. Of course he immediately changed his plans and asked by telephone for a parlor-car seat.

Paid $500 for Special to Football Game.

"'You not only can't get a seat—you can't get standing-room on the rear-platform,' was the reply. 'Trains jammed; all filled up.'

"You know, there is quite a mob goes up to New Haven to see the long-haired boys kick the ball around.

"Well, the contractor was anxious, so he said he guessed he'd take a special. Then he got his solar-plexus blow.

"'I've run eighteen specials to-day, and every bit of spare equipment I've got is on the rails,' the superintendent told the contractor over the wire. 'I wouldn't run another for less than five hundred dollars.'

"'Take you,' answered the contractor.

"'Take what?' came back the puzzled voice over the phone.

"'Take one special train at five hundred dollars. Stop at a Hundred and Ninety-Steenth Street. And beat it up here—for I haven't missed the kick-off since I graduated, and I don't propose to miss it now.'

"And he didn't either. For the superintendent begged, borrowed or stole a locomotive somewhere, and sent it up to the contractor with a freight-caboose attached and a man in overalls for a conductor—but the contractor didn't miss the kick-off.

"I heard something about a suburban train that was very late, because it was pulled by a switching-engine, and I've always suspected the superintendent of being a Yale man and with a sympathy for the game contractor, but I don't know that he robbed his suburban train of its good engine. I only guess."

"I am a Yale man myself," confessed the Big Business Man, "and I like to see the kick-off. But—I don't know that I'd be that game."

Private Cars Cost $200 or More a Day.

"Lots of them are, though—it's funny the way people with money will spend it," mused the conductor, tipping his ashes carefully into the proper receptacle, for the porter was awake. "There's all this private-car work. You'd be surprised to know what a lot of money is spent in hiring private cars."

"Hiring them? I supposed private cars were what the name implies — privately owned."

"Oh, no. Nothing like that. I suppose there may be a few men with private cars of their own just as there are men with private yachts and private boxes at the opera. But most of them are just hired. The Pullman Company keeps a lot of them ready and waiting at the big terminals. They cost twenty-five full fares to haul around, and something like fifty or seventy-five a day as a renting charge and—"

"I don't think that's fair!" cried the Big Business Man. "Why pay twice for it?"

"How about standing still and using it for a hotel?" the conductor smiled. "There are a lot of them at the Exposition in California this minute. People hire them, go there, spend a week, two weeks, a month. Where would the Pullman Company come in if the hauling was all that was paid?

"No, you have to pay for the car and you have to pay for having it hauled, and you have to pay for what you eat—and what with car-hire, mileage for twenty-five people and food for yourself, guests and crew, and tips to the crew—cook, porter, brakeman — you won't get off much less than two hundred to two hundred and fifty dollars a day, and, of course, if you travel very far in a day you can easily make that figure too small.

"I was telling you about Miss Russell. Lots of the big theatrical people use private cars and special trains. When you make two or three thousand a week I suppose you have to lie awake nights thinking how to spend it, and—"

The conductor got up.

The Big Business Man looked out of the window.

The train slid to a stop. There was a moment's silence, then a bump—off again.

"Three minutes and ten seconds," said the conductor, resuming his seat. "West Philadelphia. We are ahead of the regular train now. No chance to miss New York by three.

Theatrical People Liberal Spenders.

"Well, as I was saying. Lots of the theatrical people use private cars. There is that fellow who plays the piano—you know; the one with the long hair—Paderewski—that's the one. Well, in one of his tours he went up to Vassar College to play to the young ladies.

"He got a thousand dollars for his evening's work, they say. And he chartered a special train and a private car and hired the chef out of a New York hotel. I gather that he spent more than half of his fee for paying to make himself comfortable. And I could have traveled there and back for twenty-five dollars and had some change left. But I couldn't do the playing, that's a fact."

"I always wondered where the money came from to pay for the special trains for opera troupes," wondered the Big Business Man.

"Humph!" snorted the conductor. "It doesn't cost them anything. The special train for a whole opera troupe is cheaper than regular transportation, because it saves bother and doesn't cost any more. Hire a special train at two dollars a mile and you are entitled to a hundred tickets. The opera company keeps together, has its own cars and privacy, and it doesn't cost any more and makes splendid advertising.

No Extra Charge for Ball-Players' Specials.

"Same way with the baseball players. Regular fare for them, and two special cars—not private cars, as the railroad understands the term, but just regular Pullmans. They are absolutely private and cost the management just forty Pullman fares apiece. At that it costs something to cart a ball-team around.

"But people don't care what they spend for baseball. We had a special last year from Washington to Philadelphia of half a dozen Washington fans who had more money than they needed—and that same bunch went up to Boston on a special, too.

"But when you come to spending money for baseball, the newspapers have every one skinned. They don't care what it costs so they get the news and the advertising. When New York thought it was going to cop the interleague title last time there was a special train run from Chicago with nothing but a lot of Western baseball writers on board.

"They wanted to work on the train and they wanted to be there in time, so their papers paid for a special train, and they nearly broke the rail-joints getting there. They averaged nearly fifty an hour coming East, but they got there."

"Can a man who owns his private car have it switched onto any train he wants?" asked the Big Business Man, wondering if he could afford one for himself, and thinking how nice it would be to have his own car on the suburban line which took him daily to and from his Long Island mansion to the big terminal in New York.

Many Private-Car Clubs on Suburban Lines.

"You can't get a private car onto a suburban train," was the immediate answer, "because the revenue to the company from the hauling doesn't compensate for the delays in traffic incidental to the switching. You can't get it on some extra fancy-fare express trains—apart from that, unless the train is already too heavy to make her time, you can have her tacked on about where you please.

"But if you want a private car for suburban use a lot of you can have it together. Having a private car as an integral part of a regular suburban train is common practise, as I suppose you know, and there

are a number of private-car clubs running into and out of New York and Philadelphia and Boston and Chicago all the time.

"Of course the greater number of private cars, outside those hired by the day from the Pullman Company, belong to the railroads. They call them 'business cars.' And generally the bigger the railroad the plainer the car. The one Mr. Cassatt, president of the Pennsy, used to use was nothing extraordinary in cars—just a comfortable, easy-going, nice-riding, private Pullman. But Mr. Cassatt didn't have much time to think about himself and his comfort.

Little Roads Run Ornate "Business Cars."

"It takes the little roads to spend thirty and forty thousand dollars on their cars. And because they get hauled free—what? Why, one road hauls another road's private official car free, just as one doctor will treat another for nothing. Because they get hauled around free the smaller railroads like to make a good showing with their private cars when their officials travel. It's about the last stronghold of the free pass, and at that it's a burden to the big roads.

"Of course, their officials have return-haul privileges. But how often do you suppose any one on the Pennsy or the New York Central wants to take a trip to the middle of nowhere on the Skeedunk and Squashtown? Never.

"Yet the Skeedunk and Squashtown—yes, and a hundred other roads you never heard of unless you read a railroad guide—have their private cars, and their high officials bone the Pennsy and the New York Central and the other great roads for free transportation every year."

"Well, I suppose there must be some compensation somewhere, or the big roads wouldn't do it," said the Big Business Man.

"Yes," was the answer. "I suppose there are return courtesies which are useful. But when I get rich—which I won't do soon, being born a railroadman and educated to be a conductor and not willing to trade jobs, not even with Rockefeller—when I get rich and want to travel, a special car tacked onto the regular train is good enough for me, unless I have to be in a tearing hurry like you, in which case I suppose I will spend my five hundred and fifty-nine dollars as easily as you did."

"Six hundred dollars," was the easy answer. "I sha'n't forget the two up ahead nor the porter here. I've no money to offer you, my friend, for your entertainment. But—here's my card. If you lay over here to-night—or any other night—and will look me up at my club I'll see if there isn't one of these private-car theatrical stars you were talking about that we can look at together from the front. And at that it won't be as interesting as your private-car story."

"Why—why—I—"

The train slid to a stop. The Big Business Man shook hands hurriedly, glanced at his watch and saw that the hands pointed to two minutes of three.

"They did it—they did it!" he muttered. "If I get there in time to vote my stock it's worth it—"

But the conductor didn't say, and so, of course, this chronicle cannot, whether the four-hour run of a five-hour schedule was worth what it cost to the Big Business Man who was willing to spend ten dollars a minute to save sixty of them.

ANOTHER SWISS VALLEY OPENED.

WITH the completion of the Leuk-Leukerbad Railway another romantic, sequested Swiss valley — the Dala — is brought into up-to-date communication with the outer world.

The railway starts from the station Leuk-Susten on the Simplon line of the Swiss Federal Railroads system and traverses immediately the Rhône on a newly constructed bridge. Passing the little city of Leuk, which is situated on a vine-clad hillside, the line begins to ascend the valley of the Dala, high above the river, thus affording a splendid view of the Valaisan Alps. Stopping-places have been created for the two hamlets of Albinnen and Rumeling and a regular station has been allotted to the village of Inden. After Inden the line follows the old post-road high above the Dala Gorge; Russengraben, a third stopping-place is passed and in another fifteen minutes the train reaches the Baths of Leuk, which has been a watering-place since ancient Roman times. While the trip by diligence required four hours, the railway covers it in an hour and six minutes.

The road is a narrow-gage electric line with a total length of six and a half miles. Use has been made of the old post-road for a distance of two and a half miles. Noteworthy technical features of the railway are three tunnels and three bridges.

HONK AND HORACE.

BY

EMMET F. HARTE.

Alias
"Lovekins."

AT WHICH POINT I LOST MY SELF-CONTROL.

AS I've p'r'aps mentioned before, I freely confess to being a man of blood and iron. If my lot had been cast in a different time and place, there's no doubt I'd have been noted as a dangerous proposition—a "bad man," a ruthless and dare-devil snuffer-out of human lives. But fortunately for all concerned I have never permitted this inherent tendency of mine to get uppermost. I've kept it chained and subservient to the dictates of an inexorable will bulwarked and backed up by a high sense of honor and ethics. I'm able to see that the indiscriminate massacre of Tom, Dick, and Harry over trifles would not only be uncouth and inconsiderate, but downright foolish in a man of my erudition and rectitude. It isn't well-bred or sportsmanlike. A true sportsman will live and let live.

This brief personal analysis—I hope I'll not be accused of riding the personal pronoun—ought to convince everybody that the reason I'm considered a genial and harmless good fellow instead of a grim, two-gun desperado is wholly a matter of my own choosing. I really could be a mighty tough outfit if I'd allow myself to turn loose. I thank you.

And now devolves the recital of the near-tragic circumstances revolving around my quarrel with a certain party named Speese. George Augustus Speese was the rather high-flown designation he bore when the evidence was all in. Incidentally you may note that his initials form a kind of acrostic which I deemed at one time a key-word aptly describing his mental and moral status—but smoke is sometimes an indication of fire.

Well, anyhow, the said gentleman arrived in Valhalla one day from somewhere elsewhere, and proceeded to suffuse as well as diffuse himself round about pungently, and with an airiness which might be termed breezy on such short acquaintance.

I first noticed him when somebody left the office door open one morning, and he floated in like a dirigible balloon, coming to anchor temporarily in Honk's chair,

This series started in the issue for November, 1908. Another will appear next month.

Honk at the moment being out. Commandeering a pad of telegraph blanks, the gink scrawled a message and tossed the same to me with the supercilious gesture of one of these lordly guys who blow in, off, and out every now and then to sell me a vacuum cleaner or automatic pants-buttons. I set him down for a piker of this ilk when I saw his initials, "G. A. S.," signed to the telegram.

"Get that on the wire right away," he ordered, much as if I was a dog he didn't like to begin with.

You know there are folks and folks. Some have the faculty of grating on you the first time you see 'em. A trick of tone or manner, a twist of facial expression, the merest trifle ofttimes, but enough to queer 'em with you instantly. And this bumptious buddy affected me that way.

I glanced over the message with a perfunctory eye. It was addressed to some Janet in Orion, and consisted mostly of, "Hello, babe! How's babe? Say, girly, I'm sure going to see you Saturday," and a lot more nauseating balderdash like that.

I turned a coldly glittering stare upon the inditer of such insipid rot. I saw before me a pale-haired, pink-eyed, smirking, self-important, fully inflated specimen of the genus masher if I ever saw one—and they abound frequently in this climate, more's the pity.

The female flirt is a bird I pass up with a shrug, but the male masher is a stench in the nostrils of my forbearance. I frowned darkly. It was a portent, but he evidently didn't believe in signs or omens.

"Come, come, old top!" he repeated impatiently. "Get that message off at once. It's important. The lady' waiting."

"Uff!" I sneered ironically, and without wasting further words on him I wadded the paper into a ball and flipped it contemptuously in the waste-basket.

Then I resumed my regular work, humming the air of that plaintive melody, "Good-by, Hiram; It Is Hard to See You Leave."

For a moment the gay Lothario near by appeared somewhat dampened, but the dampness presently affected him like the famous wet hen—he became perceptibly peeved.

"Here, fellow!" he roared. "Whaddye mean by that, hey? I guess you don' know who I am, do yuh? You get that message on the wire, I tell yuh, or—"

At which point I lost my self-control.

"No, I don't know who you are, and I don't want to know!" I told him as I got untangled from my armchair. "But you get out of here, and be quick about it!"

And I leaped at him. But he was something of a side-stepper himself, and was over in easy ducking distance of the open door before I got launched hardly. He paused there and began to bark at me noisily.

"You've refused to send a message for me!" he yammered. "I'll get you for that, fatty! I'll see that you get what's coming to you all right, all right. You just as well kiss yourself good-by now."

Of course that sort of talk only served to fan my smoldering ire into a bright blaze and, grabbing a handful of paperweights and an aluminum paper-cutter, I went for the guy all spraddled out. He didn't wait; when I arrived at where he'd been he wasn't there—but I heard a whistling sound receding along the platform which indicated the way he'd gone. I did not try to pursue him farther; 'twas easy to see he was too speedy for me unless I had more at stake.

Just at that moment Honk tripped around the corner of the depot from the other way and came up all agog with curiosity.

"What's up, Horace?" he importuned. "What're you doing with those paperweights?"

"Nothing at all," I retorted. "I was merely practising defensive maneuvers so's to be in form if a Mexican army should invade Valhalla."

"Wasn't that Speese beating it toward town?" Honk persisted. "You and him haven't been having a misunderstanding, have you?"

"Is his name Speese?" I asked. "He didn't say. He seemed to think he was some kind of a celebrity, though; and he also got gay with me incidentally—something I don't allow anybody to do when I'm at myself. And a pink-eyed four-flusher least of all."

"Oh, say, Horace, that's rich!" Honk chortled. "Why, don't you know who Speese is? My boy, George A. Speese is assistant traffic manager of the Transcontinental lines. He's one of the big

bugs, with influence in the inner circles. You didn't really antagonize him, I trust. For if you did, he's in a position to make trouble for you a whole lot."

I felt a slight feeling akin to an inward qualm, but I preserved my outward calm. Assistant traffic manager, was he? In a way, my superior officer. Humph! All right, I didn't wish him any bad luck other than I hoped he'd choke.

"Trouble?" I growled. "Oh, I guess not so it'll keep me awake nights."

Honk looked grave and shook his head pessimistically. But then Honk is prone to look on the dark side of things. He sees pestilences in drainage ditches and elemental upheavals in clouds no bigger than a man's hand—as well as sermons in stones and insurrections in the mutterings of every disgruntled section hand.

I returned to my work whistling. I've an idea that the affair would have passed from my mind by evening if Honk hadn't brought the subject up again about bedtime.

"I've seen and talked with your man Gus Speese," he said. "He asserts that you insulted him grossly to-day, besides attempting a murderous assault upon his person. He has armed himself with a large automatic pistol, and says he intends to come down here and get you. We had a hard time dissuading him up at the club—"

"Let him come a running!" I flared. "But 'twould be well for him to bring the coroner with him when he comes; he'd better make his arrangements with an undertaker, too. Two can play at the gun-game, I reckon, if that's what he wants."

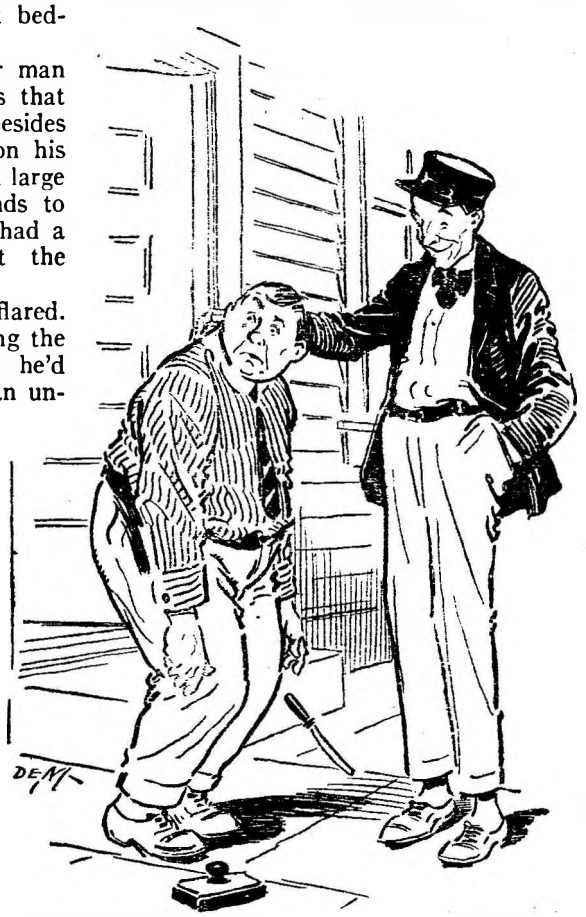
Honk's half-formed scoffing expression melted into a sickly grin.

Of course my first impulse, after hearing of my enemy's openly avowed threats against my person, was to take my trusty air-pistol, go seek the fellow out, and snuff his candle for him without powwow or pother; but I permitted myself to cogitate a tenth of a second too long over it, and my staid and calmer self argued me down.

To kill a man for the mere sport of seeing him fall were bootless pastime, i' faith. Not only profitless to all concerned, but wasteful of nature's resources. For a man, after all, be he ever so worthless and unimportant to the community in general—he may be an incubus, a detriment, a wart on the face of civic self-respect, yet, after all's said and done, he's a human "bean" and molded to the same pattern as the emperor of an empire.

Who am I to say that he isn't created for some purpose, though that purpose may seem vague and obscure when we try to search it out? And still more, who am I that I should arrogantly elect myself as judge, jury, and executioner to settle such a person's hash for him without benefit of clergy, hope of posterity, or even advice of counsel, so to speak?

Do not think, however, that I was able to suppress every hostile impulse without strenuous opposition on the part of my militant self. The jingo and the peace-at-any-price sides of my nature clashed



I FELT A SLIGHT FEELING AKIN TO AN INWARD QUALM.

IT WAS REALLY AFFECTING.

like two tom-cats afoul of each other in a dark alley. Thanks to my nickel-steel determination, the peace element prevailed.

I did not go on the war-path after the blatant Speese. I even made shift to avoid the rummy—for his own sake—though it galled me sore to do this. No quinin pill could be bitterer than to stand aloof behind drawn shades in the Medicine House and let that insufferable gasconader swagger at will through out city's streets on his pretended hunt for me. It was all but unbearable.

One thing—he took good care not to come near the station when 'twas likely I'd be there. I saw him at long pistol-range once or twice, but luckily was able to hold myself in check.

Two days passed of this sort of bush-whacking around the final issue. Two days, during which Honk busied himself—so he said—trying to keep the two of us from meeting face to face.

I'll say this. Honk agitated himself in this connection at his own instigation. I made no concessions or overtures to the enemy. As Polonaise says to his son Lee Arts as Lee was about to take a trip into the hill-billy country, "Beware of quarrels, but, being in, buck up and see to it that the other fellow does a little looking out!" or words to that effect, which same is the way I engage in a row. I do my best to avoid trouble, but once engaged I'm a terror from the territory.

Another thing, however, while I think of it. Two days had passed as mentioned, and in addition to my being as yet unperforated by the avenger's bullets, I was still drawing pay as an incumbent of my regular job. To a casual analyst one or both of two things was suggested. Either the bombastic assistant traffic manager was a big bluffer or else Honk had greatly overestimated his influence and potency at headquarters. This only made me more relentless, though, if anything. Honk reported at supper.

"Well, you can breathe easier for a day or two," he said. "Speese left town just now, on the 7.11 choo-choo, for the West, so Sandy Mac tells me. He probably went to see his sweetheart at Red Rock over Sunday; she lives there, I understand. Banker's daughter. Liable to become Mrs.

Speese, too, pretty soon, if reports are true. But he'll be back Monday, I've an idea, so don't let him catch you napping."

"Bah!" I exclaimed—all the more loudly because I felt relieved.

For it is more or less of a strain for one to be continually holding their fighting impulses in check, as I'd been doing for several days.

"Bah!" I sneered. "He is the one to be careful about coming upon me too abruptly, or his banker's daughter lady friend will be buying floral horseshoes instead of orange-blossoms. Banker's daughter! Bunk! And she lives in Orion, not Red Rock. Though he may be a heart-smasher with a mash in every port. I dunno."

I'd like to know for sure who started the story around town that I was about to have the skid put under me by the Transcontinental. Honk declared he had no hand in it. But somebody took it upon himself to scatter the calumnious allegation that I was slated for the tin canister, judging from the number of long-faced condolers that called to tender their regrets.

A score or more dropped in or telephoned on Saturday—ranging from Greasy Gormley, yard engineer, and his fireman, Chet T.-Smith, to P. Q. Armitage, millionaire man-about-town and secretary-treasurer of the All Nighter's Club. Even Butch Poteet drove past with his bill-posting cart or tumbrel, and stopped to hold an autopsy over my impending hiatus.

"If nothing else turns up," he said dolefully as he was departing, "I'll make a place for you, Horace, sticking posters. It's hard lines to be canned with winter coming on, but don't grieve, bo, don't grieve. Us O. S. O. brothers 'll stand by you." I told him to go jump in the reservoir and forget it.

Windy Bill Wilson and Hippo Jones, jehu and drayman respectively, went even further than Butch. They proposed circulating a subscription paper among the teeming horde of teamsters, telephone linemen, white-wings, and such rude but loyal gentry to provide me with funds for a protracted rainy season.

And I really believe if I had hinted at it by so much as a word Cap Bellows, manager of the Valhalla Catamounts, would have freely given me a benefit day at the baseball park. It was really affecting; almost made me feel sorry for myself when I stopped to think of it.

Saturday afternoon two telegrams came from the Speese person over my wire from his various inamoratas. The first one, from Orion, at 2.15, said:

> Are you coming Sunday? Am expecting you. Wire without fail.
> (Signed) MARIAN.

The second message, received at 3.09, was from the skirt in Red Rock, and was almost mushy enough to decant, to wit:

> Is lovekins coming to see dovey? Be sure come Sunday. Send night letter quick. Kisses.

This one was signed "Marianne."

I beguiled myself for a couple of minutes conjuring up mental pictures of these two Mary Anns, one of which, to my notion, was the real goods and the other imitation. It was easy enough for a man like me who knows human nature, and especially feminine human nature, same as I know my Morse.

The young woman named Marian, of course, was a brown haired and eyed, quiet, kind-hearted, serious-minded girl, easily blandied into believing what that conscienceless deceiver Speese saw fit to tell her. The kind of a girl to break her heart over a worthless pup like him, when the world is full of good men and true that she might pick from.

On the other hand, the baby doll who signed herself Marianne—well, she wasn't the kind to get singed in the game of hearts, you bet.

I could visualize her quite plainly. A typical Pert the Flirt, out for the gilt and glitter; vain, shallow, superficial, sophisticated, self-centered, calculating, capricious. A butterfly, languorous, spiteful, alluring, or imperious, at will. A cuckoo in bird-of-paradise guise feigning the innocence of a jenny wren.

Oh, I can read 'em, the hussies! They don't fool me with their "why don't lovekins come to its dovey" dope. Not for one minute!

I deliberated whether to hold the messages until my enemy's return—if he ever returned—or to chuck 'em into the garbage and be done with it. I dropped them into a drawer of my table until I decided.

My friend the enemy got back on an early train Monday morning, however. I saw him first—and was able to strong-arm my inclinations into side-stepping him once again. I kept out of his sight by gliding into the freight-room and sliding the door to after me. 'Twas a distasteful dose to my pride to do this, but better that than have the gink's blood on my hands, I trow.

I heard him come into the office and I said loudly:

"Where's the fat mutt? I want to have a heart-to-heart chat with him."

It was all I could do to hold myself in, at that. My teeth actually chattered with a kind of cold-blooded murderousness, like a rat in a corner. Then I heard Honk's voice sweet as melted honey dripping from a golden chalice.

"Why—um—Horace is out of the city," he lied suavely. "His—er—grandmama had an accident—fell down the marble steps leading from the Italian terrace of her summer home at—ah—Shady Lodge, Oklahoma, you know. I understand she suffered a compound fracture of the legs and ribs, and Horace, being her favorite nephew—I mean grandchild—ha, ha!—was sent for. Is there anything I could—"

"Quit your kidding, Simpson," snorted the assistant traffic manager. "Where is this grouchy friend of yours? No, it isn't anything you could handle. It's a personal matter between him and me."

Honk stoutly adhered to his original contention that I was not within a convenient radius of communication, and Speese went out finally, growling in his neck.

It looked very much as if he was going to force the issue to a fatal conclusion in spite of me. I had hoped he might have cooled off somewhat over Sunday, but it appeared he hadn't. He seemed to have grown more rabid if anything, and utterly blinded to the danger that hung over him like a pile-driver suspended by a hair. Well, I could be goaded only so far and no farther!

Toward evening—it was in the semi-gloom of the gathering twilight, to be exact—as I was slipping quietly up-town after a bit of chewing-tobacco, I almost ran into Speese coming out of the Oasis cigar-store. I fancy that he saw and recognized me, for he hailed me by name as I ducked around the corner, dodged through a seething stream of street traffic, and so on until I had put several blocks between him and my itching fingers. Perhaps I should have plugged him then and there, and had the thing over; it evidently had to be, sooner or later—but h-m—well—

From that moment on I had the queer, restless, vague feeling that I was being hunted "like a quarry slave at night," as What's-His-Name says in his poem on death and taxes. A feeling of being sought after in a way that was neither profitable nor pleasant to me, all around town. I returned to the Medicine House, perdue. And then the thought struck me that the Medicine House was one of the places Speese would naturally turn to first, and by sheer good luck might catch me there at a disadvantage.

Besides, I had no written guarantee that he was an honorable foeman. What was to hinder him from potting me through a window from ambush if he chose? No; the more I thought about it the less I felt like I wanted to be cooped up. As a fighter I prefer the open.

Honk was about to go up to the club, and invited me to accompany him. After considering all sides of it I accepted his invitation. But for formality's sake I secretly stuck my air-pistol in my breast-pocket, also an old British bulldog revolver of Honk's, together with a larger .45-caliber horse-pistol (unloaded), and a carving-knife or so, in my waistband under my coat-tails. Forearmed is — or ought to be—armed fore and aft.

The first face that pained my vision upon entering the great, oak-beamed, mullioned, and shield-hung tap-room of the club was the coyote's mug of Gus Speese. I saw that he saw—and so on; you know the old saw about Esau, I assume. And I saw also that he was coming my way, too. Headed toward me intentionally. Toward *me!*

I deliberated for the space of an instant, weighing, selecting, rejecting a thousand plans whereby we might reach a mutual understanding. Then I decided to give him one, and only one, more chance for his life. If he accepted it, good! If not, good anyway.

Acting swiftly, I stepped backward through one of the low, open bastions, or windows, on to the stone parapet outside, and thence escalading the escarpment,

or balustrade, I dropped lightly as a young and active behemoth to the flagstones below. If Speese had the temerity to follow me, his blood be upon—

By Janus, the god of strife! He had followed me already. In fact, the agile ruffian had preceded me! Having somehow divined my movements, he'd skipped through a window and dropped overboard same as I had done. At all events, there also with one end of his nose inserted in the yawning muzzle of my horse-pistol (unloaded). His rush ended just in time, I say. Two or three steps farther, and I know something would have happened—something dreadful.

I DUCKED AROUND THE CORNER.

he was confronting me, and, foolish and criminally careless though it may seem, he apparently was about to attack me barehanded. I could see several, maybe all, of his hands, and he hadn't a weapon in sight. Did the fellow think he was a Samson, or an Abernathy, or what?

Well, the crisis had come finally, and doubtless 'twould be expeditious to have it over and done with. By a clever ruse I let him back me into a corner of the buttressed wall where no one could get at me from behind, and there, with a two-handed gesture quicker than scat I drew a double handful of guns and knives preliminary to the grand fiasco—I mean fiesta—of gore.

My adversary's guardian angel must have been on the job that night, for he stopped with his chest pressed against the stubby barrel of my bulldog revolver, and

He began to parley, a little bit hysterically, I thought.

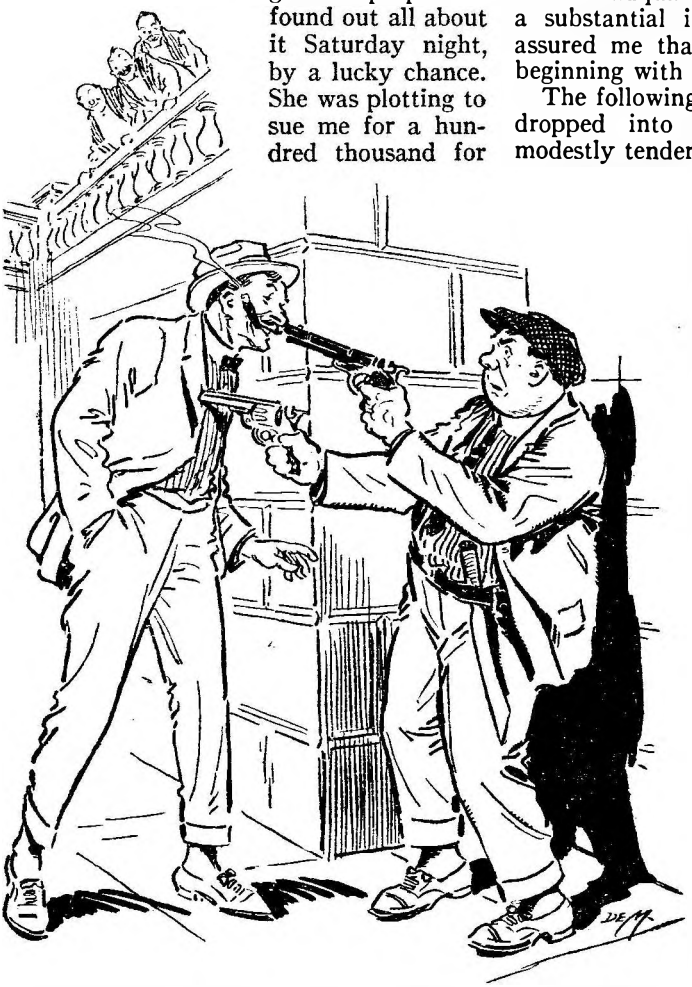
"Don't shoot, Horace, you big gump!" he cried piteously, albeit he was laughing as if about to burst into tears at one and the same time. "Put up your artillery," he went on. "I'm not going to hurt you, old top! I merely wanted to shake hands with you and tell you I appreciate what you did for me the other day."

I cudgeled my memory. I couldn't recall doing anything for him. He was either crazy with fear or scared silly. Ah! I saw what he was up to! He was feigning friendliness in order to save his miserable life!

"Well, cackle fast," I growled. "Spiel up. You've been threatening to 'get' me. And now you've got me cornered. Show what you advertise. Go on. I dare you."

"Tut-tut!" he said. "I was sore at you

for a minute or so when you refused to send that wire for me, but I've heard later news. That's what I want to tell you about. You've saved me from getting into a mess of trouble, old chap. That chicken over at Orion was just getting ready to gaff me proper. I found out all about it Saturday night, by a lucky chance. She was plotting to sue me for a hundred thousand for breach of promise; see? She's a professional at that sort of thing. And that telegram you threw in the waste-basket would have made a crackerjack Exhibit A. It was a close shave for little Rollo, but thanks to you I guess I'm in the clear."



TWO OR THREE STEPS FARTHER AND I KNOW SOMETHING WOULD HAVE HAPPENED—SOMETHING DREADFUL.

I slowly lowered my battery. Then, hearing a commotion above me, I looked up. A dozen heads were gawking from the battlements.

"Come," I commanded. "Let us repair to yon ice-cream-soda bazaar and review the matter over a cherry phosphate. Methinks I smell burning rubber."

We went thither fraternally, arm in arm. Once acquainted with the man socially, Speese was a prince of a good fellow. He showed me a copy of a letter he had sent in to headquarters, recommending me for a substantial increase in salary, and he assured me that I'd get the extra money beginning with the next pay-day.

The following morning my friend Speese dropped into the telegraph office and modestly tendered me a scribbled message.

"I'd like to get you to send that for me, Horace," he said humbly, "provided, that is, after you read it, it meets with your wise and far-seeing approval. I hope it does, for the young lady in question is a dear and a duck. She's a regular kitten; the only child of very wealthy parents. Her father's a banker in Red Rock. Marianne" — he pronounced it Mary Ann —"certainly is the girl for me."

He paused for lack of breath. I took the telegram and glanced over it.

MISS MARIANNE TRAVERS:
Will you marry me at once? Wire answer quick.
(Signed)
YOUR IMPATIENT GUS.

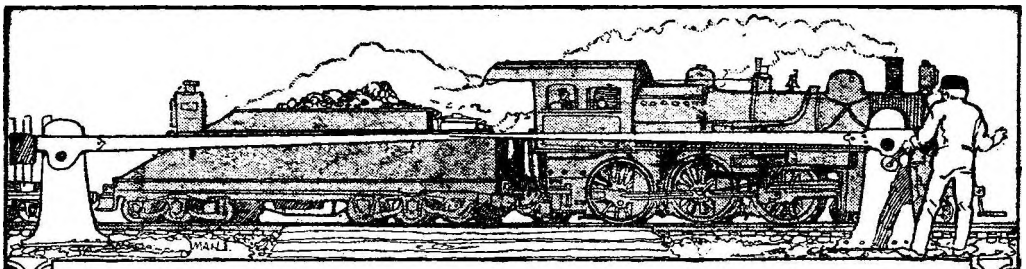
Um-h-m! So "Dovey" was the one, eh? And a few days agone I had set the seal of my tentative disapproval on Dovey, dubbing her shallow and calculating among other things. But she was a banker's daughter—and sole heiress.

I nodded my unqualified indorsement of the proposition as stated, and titillated my key in a hurry call for Red Rock.

In twenty minutes an answer came:

Sure thing, lovekins. You say when. Million kisses. (Signed) M.

I clear forgot to show Speese the two telegrams in my drawer; still they didn't affect the general result. So ho, very well!



CHECKED OUT.

BY "EMCY."

CHECKED out last night as the sun set,
But everything's O. K.,
And his pass reads over the Great Divide,
And into the Perfect Day.
For forty years he has labored
And handled the flag or key.
But never a "black" recorded
Against his integrity.

Ready to help a brother,
Though that brother was only a "bum,"
Ready to share his dinner
With any who chanced to come.
Ready to see the humor,
Ready the joke to tell,
But never ready to flatter,
Or weave the deceiver's spell.

Humble? Of course he was humble.
His hands were rough and grim;
But never a stain of dirty gain
Can be found on a man like him.
And I think when he reaches Headquarters
At the terminus of the line,
And faces the General Manager
In the Office All Divine,

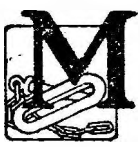
"Promotion" will be the order.
"Thou good and faithful heart,
Though humble the task assigned thee,
Thou hast nobly done thy part."
And when our time comes for checking,
God grant that our records may scan
As free from error or blot or stain,
As the card of the railroad man.

HELP FOR MEN WHO HELP THEMSELVES.

NUMBER 66.

RAILROADS AND THE MAIL.

BY C. H. CLAUDY.



MANY civil service examinations include the requirement that the candidate write a short letter or composition upon some stated subject, the idea being that the result will show command of language, general information, ease of self-expression, and generally the type and kind of education he possesses.

In one such recent examination the subject of the letter or composition was "The Railroads and the Work They Have Done for Civilization."

The Railroad's Highest Function.

As might be supposed, there were as many different answers as there were candidates taking the examination. One man thought the greatest work the railroads had done for civilization was "to give employment to thousands of immigrants." Another's conception of the empire-builders was that "railroads have created wealth by increasing land values." A third believed the railroads furthered civilization most "by promoting travel and sight-seeing and thus educating the people."

The man whose percentage in that particular examination was highest wrote a letter proving that the greatest civilizing influence of the railroad was in its power to bring manufactured articles to those far from the factory; that it was the freight business of the railroad which was its most important part as far as civilization was concerned.

He was near the mark, not on it. In conducting a particular branch of what, broadly considered, is the railroad's freight business—namely, the mail service—the railroads find their highest function. Either the railways follow the mail service or the mail service follows the railways. The two are interdependent. If all aspects of the question are considered, it is, after all, upon the mail, its prompt and cheap delivery, its reliability and its enormous extent, that our own particular variety of complicated civilization depends. And we would have no mail service—such as we are accustomed to call a mail service—were it not for the railroads.

Modern Mails Depend Upon the Railroad.

You write a letter; you buy a two-cent stamp; you affix one to the other and drop the letter through a slot in a box or in a mailing-chute in a building. You never see the letter again. But you are confident that within a few hours of the

actual time it requires a train to go from the mailing-point to the address-point a blue-gray coated man will hand your letter to the person to whom it is addressed. Cost? Two cents. Anxiety? Nil. Reliability? Absolute. Means? Organization and—the railway.

Like the telephone, the electric light, the water which pours from a spigot to our bath-tub, the telegram the uniformed boy brings to our doors, the power in a pint of gasoline, or the convenience of a street-car line which is not in the street at all, but twenty feet overhead or underground, we accept the despatch and the delivery of mail as a matter of course. Not ours to wonder why or how or who—life is too short.

The telephone bell rings and we answer—the telegram comes and we pay—the spigot is turned on and we drink or bathe—we write and the letter is carried—the postman rings and we read our morning mail.

Of the hidden machinery, the wonderful organization, the extent and wonder of the system, we have little or no comprehension and less care.

And it is a pity. For the power that whisks your letter from coast to coast or across two blocks of city, for the same two cents, the organization which makes the reliability of the mail almost like an inexorable law of nature, the wonder which the railways have wrought in the most potent civilizer the world has ever known, is well worth any man's knowledge.

Details of Work Unknown to Public.

What happens, anyway, when you put a two-cent stamp upon a letter and drop it in a box? You are in the metropolis; your correspondent is in San Francisco, let us say, three thousand miles away. You guess, perhaps, that a collector comes around and opens the box in which you placed the letter; that he takes it to the post-office; that some one there puts it into a bag with a lot of other letters also bound for the Pacific coast; that the bag is put on a train, and that, in the course of time—you may guess it a week or know it much less—the bag is taken off the train in San Francisco, and that there your letter is handed to the carrier who takes it to the office or house to which you have addressed it.

And your guess is right in its broad outline, but the picture is only an outline—a hundred, a thousand details are there which you or I never see, contributing each its quota to the perfection of the whole, and without any one of which your letter may go astray or take more than its due proportion of time for its journey.

New York-Omaha Mail-Train Daily.

At five minutes after three and sixteen minutes of nine every morning and at half past nine every night mail starts from New York for San Francisco. The despatch from New York at 9.30 P.M. is an exclusive mail-train the entire distance from New York to Omaha. Between New York and Chicago the train is made up of three postal cars, bound New York to Chicago; with one postal car, New York to Detroit; two postal cars, Boston to Chicago; one postal car, Boston to Toledo; and one storage car, New York to Omaha.

The cars from Boston to Chicago and Toledo are placed in the through train at Albany, making a total of eight cars west of that point, except that the car from Boston to Toledo is cut out of the train at the latter point, and the car from New York to Detroit is transferred at Toledo to the Detroit and Toledo route.

From Omaha to Ogden the train is limited to mail and express, no passenger traffic being carried between those points. West of Ogden the regular passenger-train with necessary postal-car equipment is used.

In the transit of the mails between New York and San Francisco transfers occur at Chicago, U. P. Transfer, Iowa, and Ogden, Utah, except in the case of the train leaving from New York at 9.30 P.M. The use of the storage car in this train relieves the necessity of a considerable transfer at Chicago, as the storage car loaded to its full capacity is transferred intact between stations for despatch west from Chicago; and mail for transfer in excess of that loaded in the storage car is transferred by wagons in the usual fashion.

The use of the storage car in connection with the particular train referred to was introduced for the purpose of economy in time on account of the volume of the transcontinental mail formerly requiring wagon transfer from the particular train under consideration.

And how long does it really take?

The mail which leaves New York at 3.05 A.M. Monday reaches San Francisco at 2.10 P.M. Thursday; time in transit, eighty-three hours and five minutes. Your letter leaves New York at 8.45 A.M. Monday; it reaches San Francisco at 8.50 A.M. Friday; time in transit, ninety-six hours and four minutes. Those letters which start from New York at 9.30 P.M. Monday reach San Francisco at 10.10 A.M. Friday, eighty-four hours and forty minutes in transit.

The shortest time, then, is three days, eleven hours, and five minutes; the longest, four days and four minutes. It may require several hours at each end of the line for distribution and collection; but even so it is not exactly five whole days between dropping in the box and reading by your correspondent, although because it is sometimes more than four days we usually speak in "whole numbers" and call it five days between coast and coast.

The official titles of the routes involved are New York and Chicago Railroad Post-office, New York to Chicago; Chicago and Council Bluffs Railroad Post-office, Chicago to U. P. Transfer, Iowa; Omaha and Ogden Railroad Post-office, U. P. Transfer, Iowa, to Ogden; and Ogden and San Francisco Railroad Post-office, Ogden to San Francisco. The railroad lines involved are New York Central and Hudson River, New York to Buffalo; Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, Buffalo to Chicago; Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, Chicago to U. P. Transfer, Iowa; Union Pacific, U. P. Transfer, Iowa, to Ogden; and Southern Pacific, Ogden to San Francisco.

Hardest Job Is Routing Small-Town Mail.

If your letters were directed to Los Angeles, it would go *via* the Pennsylvania to St. Louis and thence perhaps over the Santa Fe to the Southwest; if it were to Seattle you wrote, your letter would divert from the western line at Chicago and jump north to St. Paul, where the Great Northern places a train composed entirely of mail and express cars at your service.

However, great as was the transcontinental problem of mail when first St. Louis, then Kansas City, and finally Omaha was the western terminus of the most courageous railroad, it is not the letter which is mailed in New York to go the longest possible United States journey that taxes the Post-office Department or the ingenuity of man. Transcontinental mail is a simple problem. It is the letter mailed at Podunk, Maine, for Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the postal addressed from Chester, Pennsylvania, to Waycross, Georgia, or from any other town to any other not upon the same line of railway, which shows the marvel of the post-office organization in general and that of the railway mail service in particular.

Service Started During Civil War.

For the railway mail service, once a "dangerous experiment" and doubted almost by the very men who proposed it, has now become the very backbone of the postal service. It is not for the present story to enter into that long-standing controversy as to whom belongs the honor and glory of having fathered the railway mail service. Whether it was started in 1862 between Hannibal and St. Joseph, Missouri, or whether it first began in 1864 between Chicago and Clinton, Illinois, expert post-office historians have never decided with satisfaction to all parties concerned. But there seems to be no doubt that some time in the days of the Civil War the first railway post-office for the distribution and assorting of mail upon a railway car was tried.

It was such a simple idea that nobody believed in it. The war threw a great burden upon many post-offices, bringing, as it did, great loads of soldiers' letters in bulk to large post-offices, there to be assorted and despatched to the thousand and one small towns where wife or mother or sweetheart waited in dread anxiety for news of the loved ones.

Sometimes the post-offices in large cities got so congested with mail that it was impossible to attend to the every-day business, and days and sometimes weeks would go by before a pile of mail-bags would be finally reduced to empty sacks. Meanwhile those whose business it was to stand and wait suffered for the letters they could not get.

Then the idea came—why not sort letters on the train? Why waste all the valuable time spent in hauling letters to a big post-office, often to have them retrace their steps over the very route they had come?

And at some time in 1862 or 1864, as you will, the experiment was tried.

It was a success from the start. It would be idle to go into minute details to show how the first experiment became the forerunner of something bigger; how the first railway mail car built for the purpose in 1867 by the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was the first of thousands; how the first few clerks, detailed for railway work without extra pay, have grown to the army at present employed.

Sufficient that the tremendous growth occurred. Yet few have any real idea of what the railway mail service is, and how large it is, and how far it extends. The most recent figures available show that the total expenses of the postal service, including railway, buildings, salaries, equipment—*everything* for the fiscal year —were $262,067,541.

Of this huge sum—which, by the way, was less than the receipts by some four and a half million dollars—the sum of $22,925,614 was expended upon the railway mail service. This of course does not include the $51,959,387 paid by the United States for the transportation of domestic mail by the railroads.

Of 100,000 Pieces, Only 24 Go Astray.

The Postmaster-General estimates that upon the railway post-offices last year there were distributed 8,943,015,808 pieces of first-class matter, and that if the second, third, and fourth class matter handled on railway mail cars is included the clerks of that organization handled the unthinkable number of 12,653,856,360 letters, papers, and packages.

And of this enormous number 99.976 per cent was distributed correctly and reached its destination without error. In other words, 24 letters, papers, or packages, or all three, out of every 100,000 were distributed incorrectly.

The Postmaster-General estimates further that of registered mail matter there were handled and rehandled in transit 69,867,945 packages and cases, 2,226,750 registered pouches, and 1,423,664 inner-registered sacks. In addition clerks made up and despatched 1,233,925 registered pouches and inner-registered sacks; received and opened 1,177,505 registered pouches and inner-registered sacks; handled and rehandled in transit 2,238,807 registered-package jackets; made up and despatched 709,160 registered-package jackets, containing 4,623,178 pieces; received and opened 612,657 registered-package jackets, containing 4,109,550 pieces; handled and rehandled in transit 169,044 lead-seal sack jackets; made up and despatched 34,069 lead-seal jackets, containing 472,591 pieces; and received and opened 32,505 lead-seal jackets containing 455,900 pieces.

Saves Two Million Working Days a Year.

They were busy people, these railway mail clerks. Think what it would mean to the time of delivery of those twelve billions and then some pieces of mail matter if all had to be handled and distributed in city post-offices—if the time between town and town were "dead time" with letters lying supine in their bags!

A total of more than eighteen thousand employees spent their time in this work. These employees traveled over 270,718 miles of railroad and steamship lines, of which the latter account for 30,000 miles. Adding the daily travel of trains and boats for a year together, the enormous total of 486,670,013 miles is found. If the work done during the time it is required to travel this distance had to be done in city post-offices, the extra time required would be, counting thirty-five miles an hour as the average time—which is excessive—two million twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and some extra working-days of eight hours each in every year. And this is the time saved by the service which originally was of "doubtful expediency!"

The service is carried on in railway cars built for the purpose. They are of two general kinds, known as "full cars" and "apartment cars," the names being fairly descriptive. A full car is one devoted exclusively to the service of the railway mail, and an apartment car is one which is only partly devoted to that service, the rest of it being baggage, freight, express, or passenger.

Steel Mail-Cars Supplanting Wooden Ones.

There are 1,353 full cars in the service and 4,120 apartment cars. As rapidly as possible all wooden cars are being replaced with all steel cars or steel underframe cars, both for the sake of safety of the mails and of safety for the clerks. Only one clerk has so far lost his life in an accident in a steel car, whereas the casualties in other cars have been numerous.

During the last fiscal year there were no less than 277 railroad accidents in which postal clerks were either killed or injured or in which mail was lost or damaged. Six clerks lost their lives, 61 were seriously injured, and 403 slightly injured. One hundred and sixty-two accidents happened to wooden cars, with 247 injurious results, whereas only fifty steel cars were injured and 127 men hurt, including the one who lost his life—the first and only example of the failure of a steel car to conserve life in an accident to a railway post-office.

Nearly 600 of the full cars are all steel, and almost as many are steel underframe. The apartment cars are mostly wooden, 3,444 of the total of 4,120 being of that dangerous construction. On the other hand, the apartment cars are upon the smaller lines, running at a slower pace, and thus are not so subject to accident as are the full cars.

Eighty-six railroad lines carry all the steel and steel underframe cars, the "leading citizen" being the Pennsylvania with 121 steel full cars and forty-one steel apartment cars.

Costs $52,000,000 a Year to Haul Mails.

Hauling the mails costs a great deal of money. Nearly fifty-two million dollars are paid out to the railroads alone for carrying domestic mails. This compensation is based upon the actual weight of mail-matter carried, and is adjusted from time to time as the mails increase. The probabilities are that the reader has but a vague idea of the total quantity of mail carried from any one city to another or the amount which is paid for the service.

Fifty-two millions of dollars is not a "thinkable sum" to the average man. Ask your neighbor what the Pennsylvania Railroad gets for the mail it hauls between New York and Philadelphia. He is as apt to guess ten millions of dollars a year as he is to reply fifty thousand dollars, and is equally wrong on either guess.

The United States government pays to the Pennsylvania Railroad for the mails it hauls from New York to Philadelphia the tidy sum of $564,464.03 per year, which is on a basis of 91.57 miles of track, 625,735 pounds of mail carried per day, at the average rate of 34 miles per hour, for an average of just short of 400 trips per week, at the rate of $6,164.29 per mile per annum.

From New York to Boston is 229.15 miles. The New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad averages 141,133 pounds of mail daily over this line at an average speed just short of 30 miles an hour. An average of 177 trips a week are made, and at the rate of $1,502.21 per mile per year that corporation gets from Uncle Sam $344,221.42 annually.

From Philadelphia to Pittsburgh is a distance of 349 miles. Incredible though it may seem, 599,568 pounds of mail daily go over this line at 29.5 miles per hour, and 177 trips are made each week. Five thousand nine hundred and eleven dollars and thirty-six cents per mile per year pays for this transportation; a total amount of $2,063,766.06 passing from the government to the Pennsylvania Railroad for the service.

It is only upon thoughtful consideration of figures like this that any adequate idea can be gained of the intimate relation which the railroads and the mail sustain. We can speak of the millions of miles a year our railway cars travel, and of the thousands of persons employed, talk glibly of the hundred millions that the postal service spends, and the fifty millions that the railroads get. But the big figures are too big; it requires consideration of individual cases—the knowledge that there are almost three hundred *tons* of mail exchanged between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh daily—to bring home the facts.

Almost Doubled in Ten Years.

And the end is not even in sight. The growth of the mail service must keep pace with the growth of the country, the population, the business interests. The railway mail has almost doubled in size and expense in ten years. The parcel-post system is going more than to double the present system in much less than ten years.

More than 300,000,000 packages were handled in the parcel-post system in the first six months of its existence. With the increase of weight limit and the further extension of the service of course all branches of the postal establishment which touch the parcel post will be enlarged and modified. Again it is the railroad which makes the new aid to business possible—which carries your package of books to me or my can of beans to you better, more quickly, and at less cost than it can be carried in any other way.

An interesting development of the railroad mail service concerns the terminal post-office—the odd idea of doing first in a post-office the preliminary work which it is the main object of the traveling post-office to perform. Nevertheless, in special cases, such establishments save time, the essential factor in mail service.

Terminal Post-Office Expedites Letter Mail.

Under the present administration in the post-office, according to the postal authorities, plans have been made to establish at important commercial and railroad centers, under the supervision of the railway mail service, an extended system of those terminal railway post-offices for handling both parcel post and ordinary mail. Many are now in operation and others are being established.

Distribution in these terminals includes mails made up in post-offices for railway mail service distribution, which otherwise would be held without distribution before the departure of the trains. The terminals provide facilities for the distribution and proper packing of bulky and fragile parcel-post packages, which facilitates expeditious safe carriage.

This system of handling mail keeps out of postal cars a large amount of merchandise and printed matter that otherwise would cause congestion and seriously interfere with the distribution of letter mail and news matter. Distribution in these terminals is of a simple character, and can be performed by clerks with less preparation and study than are required for the more complicated distribution made in railway postal cars.

It finally disposes of approximately seventy per cent of the mail that is handled in the terminals. This large proportion of the mail, when thus made up, is forwarded in storage or baggage cars on mail-trains with equal speed, but without the additional expense that would be involved if it were carried and distributed in the post-office cars.

The things which happen to your letter, then, after you put a two-cent stamp upon it and drop it confidingly in a box, can hardly be described by saying it is collected, carried, and delivered. On railway mail cars and steamboats, through the hands of hundreds of clerks, into and out of mail-sacks, snatched perhaps from arms hanging over the track by a train at speed, perhaps tossed off by muscular arms in a tough mail-sack, through thousands of miles of travel, always by the nearest route, Uncle Sam carries your letter. He doesn't grudge you care for safety; he doesn't spare expense for reliability; he doesn't withhold generous payment to the railroads for the part they do.

Uncle Sam's Greatest Department.

The post-office is Uncle Sam's greatest department—it employs more men, spends more money, earns more money, contributes a larger quota of business and social life than any other of his many activities. Every railroad man, as well as those who are a part of the postal service, knows that it is the iron horse and the slender steel rails which have made this department possible. For though there were mails before steam, and would be mails if every railroad were blown sky-high to-morrow, nevertheless it is only by the use of the railway mail service that the time element can be conquered in the postal service. So it is that if the interval between posting and delivering of a letter is but six hours longer than the transcontinental transportation time, the result may be attributed to the railway mail service.

THE OLD FOREMAN SAYS:

EVERY TIME YOU LOOK AT THE CLOCK YOU TURN YOUR BACK ON YOUR JOB.

FROM THE RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE.

WHEN BOOBS IS BOOBS.

BY FRANK BLIGHTON.

"One Slick Trick Deserves Another," Is the Motto of Oliver Perrenod, Lawyer.

DECAPITATING his perfecto—if the assumption is permissible that a "three-for-fifty" cigar possesses a head or its equivalent — Oliver Perrenod leaned back in the Vienna bent-wood chair in Christopher's Café, after an inexpensive though satisfying luncheon.

The cigar was to him an utterly superfluous supplement. Gus, the waiter who usually served Perrenod, could not recall that the guest had ever purchased one before. Further, to the servitor's increasing perplexity, Mr. Ferrenod, a lawyer of inflexibly abstemious habits, usually, had departed most extraordinarily from his routine noon meal by ordering a liqueur after.

Until to-day, the attorney had never quite fitted into the congenial atmosphere of "Christopher's," one of those rare, old-fashioned restaurants of Teutonic proprietorship, smacking of the Fatherland in cuisine and patronage, the most élite and Bohemian resort of Rapid City.

Never before, Gus reflected, had Mr. Perrenod given any evidence of that unctuous, semisomnolence of the well-fed, reflecting a satisfaction corresponding to that of other diners who lined the little booths along the walls on both sides of the restaurant.

Usually Mr. Perrenod came in and ordered a liberal but rather Puritanical meal —in which liqueurs and cigars were equally taboo. To-day, however, the patron was enjoying an unparalleled postprandial and unmistakably drowsy period of meditation.

As was his invariable custom for some time previous, Gus hurried with the luncheck to the discreet privacy of the apartment which the lawyer occupied. Here, to his amazement, he discovered the man who had eaten, apparently in the act of getting up from beneath the table. The waiter hurried away, pretending not to notice the acute embarrassment which Mr. Perrenod would undoubtedly have felt had he not been so undeniably fuddled.

Clearly, it is bad policy to offend one whose moderate tips are, nevertheless, regular. Hence the waiter, in order to forestall any possibility of a repetition of that *contretemps*, did not again return to the booth until summoned.

On such trivial events the door of destiny swings!

For the sake of a tip, Gus avoided collision, although quite involuntarily, with what certain highbrows ordinarily term "a psychological situation."

Had he again returned to the stall, lacking a summons, it is certain that he would have been more amazed than before—for Oliver Perrenod, stately, dignified and most deliberate of men, would then and there have been discovered under the table, with one ear to a crack in the partition and displaying no traces whatever of the beatific somnolency which possessed him a moment earlier.

"Who was the man that just went out with Mr. Sylvestre?" asked the attorney upon emerging a few moments later as he lazily dropped a dollar into the unsuspecting waiter's hand and magnanimously checked the latter's archaic feint of returning the change.

"Oh, I don't know hees name, sir; but he is vun of dose pig Rabid Zity boliticians," replied Gus, reaching for Mr. Perrenod's hat and cane.

"Umph!" grunted the querent, as he walked toward the door, leaving Gus in a

suppressed paroxysm of ecstasy, contemplating a tip four times the usual size.

"Umph!" repeated Mr. Perrenod to himself as he turned the corner with a brisk, alert manner, and tossed his semi-consumed cigar into the gutter together with the two which he had not yet lighted. Also he smiled somberly as he reflected on his prudence in pouring his liqueur into the coffee-pot. That little deception would not be discovered by Gus, anyhow.

He stalked deliberately over toward the Sylvestre Terminal in which his office was located, moving mechanically through the throng which congested the down-town section of the boom city of the Pacific Northwest around midday.

Mr. Perrenod was almost oblivious of its presence, so intent was he on what he had partially overheard. He was wondering why Simeon Silvestre, multimillionaire, had been cautiously telling some low-brow alderman the story of the summary ejection of a certain individual, whose name Perrenod had been unable to catch, from Sylvestre's office that very morning.

He was still revolving the fragment he had heard over and over in his mind as he ascended to his office on the tenth floor of the Sylvestre Terminal. The circumstance was an unusual one, even in a city where the unforeseen is continually occurring.

Rapid City had sprung up in ten years to be the wonder and the envy of the Western seaboard. It had a harbor without a bar or a reef; it sat at the foot of the lowest altitude crossings of the Continental Divide and the Coast Range.

These natural advantages had long been known to those advance agents of empires —the railway constructors; but they lay dormant until one day a premature blast for the foundation of a sawmill in the thickly timbered slopes of the Sierra del Norte blew the drill-gang "to Kingdom Come" and at the same time tapped the unsuspected vein of the biggest quartz gold-producer between Culiacan, Mexico, and Douglas Island, Alaska.

As if this freak of fate had been the signal for universal activity, swarms of sturdy prospectors descended like mosquitoes or grasshoppers on every bald, forbidding rock of the mountain range.

Their advent, furious and unexpected, left the place bare of supplies. Food rose to fancy prices; picks, drills, powder, donkey-engines, mine-cars, track, and a thousand and one heavy accessories were in acute demand.

Simeon Sylvestre, until then merely a modest lumber operator and owner of a small schooner that traded between Rapid City and San Francisco, blossomed within the next decade into a magnate of transportation.

Other keen, shrewd, far-sighted gentlemen, with an eye on the main chance, sensing the enormous advantages of the growing city as a railway terminal, joined hands with Simeon Sylvestre. They tapped the main artery of a semitranscontinental road one thousand miles east and extended it to Rapid City.

The coming of the Mid-Rocky and Tidewater Railroad sent property values in Rapid City "skyhooting."

Along the new line lay fertile valleys and more fertile hills. Agriculture, lumbering, and stock-raising swept in to equalize and enlarge the splendid traffic of Rapid City's covey of big mines; little hamlets and villages dotted the new route; and then, as if fortune could not do enough for the former modest lumberman and those who rode to fame and affluence with him, a splendid hydroelectric site was "condemned," developed, and the "juice" swept seaward on tall transmission lines that paralleled the Rapid City and Tidewater Railroad.

In all the glut of profits there was only one discordant note—the terminal facilities for Rapid City itself. It so happened that the town site, sitting on a slender fork of ground, between tide-water and the big hills, was almost too small to accommodate the development which leaped at its virgin throat.

Also, others than Simeon Sylvestre and his associates were not averse to taking fortune by the forelock—while it dangled within reach. Rapid City sprouted, stalked, budded, and bloomed with such exotic suddenness that before the acute necessity of these huge terminal facilities was actually discerned the Mid-Rocky and Tidewater System found itself practically shut off from badly needed improvements.

When Rapid City boasted a population of two hundred and fifty thousand people the genius of Simeon Sylvestre came into play.

Instead of cementing hatred on the part of the townspeople, Simeon saw the solution of the Mid-Rocky and Tidewater prob-

lem in a tunnel which should run beneath the surface of the now splendid little city, operated with his new-found electric power; and decision with Simeon was the equivalent of swift action.

Meanwhile, however, the by-products of civilization had followed hard on the coming of urban developments. A franchise was needed and certain astute but predatory "old-timers" who had shared in the rise in values and waxed fat thereon, and who controlled the politics of the section, now bleated beneath their breath as to the manner in which said franchise should be granted.

The bleating never grew audible.

Instead of the contemplated "hold-up," there was no action taken by the acquisitive "city fathers" at all. The new tunnel was built without any comment except unstinted praise for Simeon Sylvestre and his associates.

Meanwhile the newspapers raged and imagined vain things about the careless conduct of various miners and cow-punchers who came in to squander their month's wages; justice took on a new dignity in "elevating the moral tone of the city"; and the formation of the bench and bar association included the lawyers and judges who shot up like asparagus under a spring sun, along with the business blocks, the Tidewater Hotel, the Sylvestre Terminal and Office Building, and other concomitants of civilization.

Oliver Perrenod was one of the lawyers who came to Rapid City in the first heyday of its success.

For five years now he had been building up a practise and keeping a weather eye out for the main chance.

That was why he frequented Christopher's Café.

The élite of Rapid City ate and drank there. Now and again he picked up a client from the business men of the town, and by his brainy resourcefulness "dug himself in" a little deeper in his legal trench on the narrow strip of flatland, while Rapid City rose to still greater opulence.

That was why Oliver Perrenod, now walking in an abstracted fashion back to his aerie in Simeon Sylvestre's crowning triumph—the Sylvestre Terminal and Office Building—was asking himself why this magnate of Rapid City had thrown a man out of his office and why he had confided the incident to a low-brow politician.

Oliver Perrenod walked over to the window and peered out at the wonderful panorama below him as he continued to wrestle with the unanswered problem. It was just such quaint, odd, inexplicable facts on which he had occasionally stumbled which had enabled him in the past to considerably enrich the exchequer of a resourceful, aggressive, and persistent gentleman—to wit, himself.

Great oaks from little acorns grow and sometimes great lawsuits have their inception in the most petty beginnings. So Mr. Perrenod continued to peer out at the rather gloomy afternoon and peer inward on the fragmentary bit of confidence which he had tried to grasp in its entirety—and failed, owing to the untimely entrance of Gus, the waiter.

The murk of the smoke-stained low-lying clouds on the other side of the bay where a big smelter operated matched the rather dingy complexion of his own thoughts. The Sylvestre Terminal stood astride the great subterranean conduits which linked the Rapid City with the mighty marts of the middle West and the effete East.

On the Rapid City side there was neither smoke nor soot. Nevertheless the west wind from the bay shore-line wafted the grime-laden, gaseous accumulations of that locality incessantly in the direction of the great terminal, whenever the wind was in that quarter.

That circumstance, however, had compensations for one in the practise of the law. Oliver Perrenod's name adorned the black directory at the head of a broad concourse, up and down which thousands of human beings walked daily. What was more, it was the very last of the lowest group of names, on a level with the eyes of people of average height, and his professional designation followed his name. That, and the fact that Perrenod could perch here, high up, like an octopus clinging to a titanic rock overhanging some great ocean highway, and now and again dart out to clutch current-flung bits of flotsam and jetsam, more than atoned for the occasional breath of sooty breeze from the west.

The incident in the restaurant might have given Oliver Perrenod a juicy nibble, for he was by no means an ordinary individual, either as a man or as an attorney. Nearly six feet tall, neither stout nor

slender, with a calm inscrutable face in the middle of which a classic nose gave an air of balance and harmony to his straight, firm line of jaw, the effect of pertinacity and aggressiveness which his countenance conveyed was heightened by the gray, well-sheltered eyes under projecting brows.

His cheek-bones were a trifle high and flecked with little spots of red when he became interested. His hair was just scanty enough around the rather lofty forehead to increase the effect of intellectuality which his general appearance created. And these were, by no means, the only tokens of a pronounced individuality which he displayed.

His conception of his profession was at once plastic and elastic, and he had no illusions, in the smallest degree, about the practise of law. Nor, for that matter, of the manner in which money is generally made.

To fellow members of the Rapid City bar, Perrenod was an enigma. By some he was regarded as shallow and erratic. These, on occasions, had reason to regret their error in thus underrating him. The common and statutory law he considered merely tools; and Perrenod knew which tool to use and when—he never made the mistake of selecting an adz when a delicate chisel was needed to gouge out a fee.

At twenty-eight years of age he had made a very fair living in New York for two years, entirely from his own resources, before emigrating West. Which all had a direct bearing on why he now stood peering out of the window, wrestling with the memory of a conversation which he had partially overheard, irritatingly conscious of the fact that if he could only have learned whom it was that Simeon Sylvestre had ordered thrown out of his office he might considerably enhance the two hundred dollars which represented his sole cash resource.

He had just arrived at this rather unsatisfactory point when the door opened and a man with an exceedingly Celtic cast of countenance came in. The fellow looked prosperous; but assuming that he was a prospective client, that signified little. It was not, as the attorney had long ago decided, the ready-money a man had that determined his intrinsic value to him.

Looking for wealthy clients is, commonly, the first error—and a very grievous one—under which many fledgling lawyers labor. Ready money is always welcome; but clients with a little money, and with causes against people with more, are often the most satisfactory in the end.

The man, who seemed to be about forty-five or fifty years of age, and slightly bandy-legged, paused, awkwardly. Perrenod moved over toward his well-ordered desk and seated himself with a calm dignity. Haste to him was a sign of a poorly balanced intellectuality—an admission of unpreparedness.

"Can I do anything for you?" he inquired in an even voice, waving the visitor to a chair near his own.

"Thot's what I want to know," said the other with a smile and a slight brogue. His features were good-natured but rather weak. "My name's Michael O'Toole, Mr. Perrenod. I've got something coming to me and I can't get it. I wanted to see if there is any way you could get it for me."

"What is the nature of your claim?" judicially countered Perrenod.

"Well, I don't know the nature of it but I know what I done. And I know what I was promised for what I done, but I didn't get it. Do you mind when Sylvestre was starting his tunnel, the one on which this building stands?"

Perrenod repressed an impulse to leap out of his chair. Could it be possible—no, he was sure the suspicion was absurd—and yet, Gus—

He held himself rigidly in hand. There could be no harm in the admission, at least.

"Quite well," he bowed. "What of it? And, by the way, Mr. O'Toole, may I inquire who recommended you to come to me?"

"I seen your name on th' board when I was going down into the chube," replied the Irishman, so frankly that Perrenod, for all his intense scrutiny of the man, could detect no sign of guile. "I was so fightin' mad that I could hardly see me own feet over something that had happened. I wanted to consult a lawyer. I started over to see wan that I used to know and he's gone to Spokane to the ra-aces. So I came back here and took another look at the board and I says: 'Mebbe this is a better lawyer than the wan I know—I'll go up and see what he says about my case.' And here I am."

Perrenod, although not entirely convinced that the fellow was not an emissary with a concealed purpose, could yet find

no flaw in the statement. His name was on the directory just as O'Toole had said—and O'Toole was not the first client who had come in because of seeing it.

Nevertheless, the mention of Sylvestre's name was a semaphore of warning. Perrenod resolved to deal warily with this fellow until convinced that his purpose in coming to the office was what it appeared to be and did not cloak some ulterior, not to say sinister, design.

"I see," said he. "Pray proceed. You mentioned Mr. Sylvestre's name, I believe. Does the matter concern him?"

"I'll leave that to you," returned O'Toole. "Me and Sylvestre used to go to the same school here when we was kids. One day he come to me and said: 'Mike,' says he, 'do you know Alderman So-and-so?' I told him I had to know him because me saloon was in his wa-ard. Well, one word brought on another, and at last I seen what he was a drivin' at. He wanted to meet the alderman in a casual or social way—so he said.

"This, mind you, Mr. Perrenod, was long before the Sylvestre tunnel idea was sprung at all, at all! So I fixed it up for him to meet the alderman, after he told me if the alderman would do what he wanted done there would be somethin' in it for th' bot' of us. I didn't know then, but afterward I gits wise that Sylvestre wants to run his tunnel down to th' bay—see?

"Well, th' long 'nd short of it is this: I got it straight on th' McManus outing fr'm a friend o' mine that Sylvestre seen th' alderman 'nd some other lads that had to be seen, so's there wouldn't be no holler about th' tunnel. And this friend o' mine gives it to me straight that Sylvestre paid that bunch a hundred 'nd sixty-five thousand dollars—at wan time 'nd another. Mind you, I hain't got no proof except what me friend tells me—'nd I wasn't to tell any wan ilse," went on O'Toole, his voice rising sharply and his brogue thickening under the memory of Sylvestre's perfidy.

"I apprehend you, perfectly. Continue."

"Well, nacherally I got me Irish up. I wint down to see Sylvestre a couple o' times. He wasn't in. This mornin' I caught him in. He gives me a mitt that feels like a salmon's tail over in the fish market on a Decimber mornin', but takes me inta his private office. I pokes his mimory up a bit, 'nd says: 'If ye don't mind, Mr. Sylvestre, I'd like what I got comin'.' He never says wan word. He poonches a little button on his desk, 'nd in comes a guy thot looks like a horned owl, wid these big eye-glasses. Sylvestre jerks wan thumb at me, th' guy grabs me by the collar fr'm behind, 'nd t'rows me out."

"Is that all?" asked the attorney, dissembling his intense interest beneath an expression of polite concern.

"Ivery blessed bit of it!" fervently exclaimed O'Toole.

Perrenod made a letter "A" of his arms, resting the elbows on his desk and leaning his chin on his clasped fingers. Also he appeared to be taking minute observations of the visitor's feet and the corner of the rug beneath the chair which he occupied.

For some time he sat quietly, then he briskly unclasped his hands and gazed at the visitor with cold directness.

"Mr. O'Toole, you have a claim for services rendered at the special instance and request of the defendant Sylvestre—a legitimate claim for bringing about the introduction he desired."

O'Toole beamed.

"The difficulty," went on the lawyer, with no change of expression, and speaking in a colorless monotone, "is that you have no proof that those were of especial value to the defendant."

"He seemed to think they were," acidly observed O'Toole, "fer he blowed hisself for a hundred 'nd sixty-five thousand — I got it straight."

"I am not referring to what are the facts," went on Perrenod, in the same even, deliberate voice, "but of the difficulty of proving them. Your friend, the alderman, for instance—he's not likely to come into court overrunning with enthusiasm to reveal what took place following his meeting with Sylvestre, is he?"

"Him?" snorted O'Toole. "Why, he's buckin' me gittin' me license renewed—and me one of the best fri'nds he's iver had on election day."

"You are in the saloon business?"

"I've been up on the corner of Puyallup Avenue 'nd—"

"Never mind—it is immaterial. Let us keep to the essentials of your claim against this man Sylvestre. Evidently Sylvestre has an understanding with the alderman, or else he would not have summarily ejected

you from his office. Otherwise, we might bring an action against him for assault."

"Oi was thinkin' of thot."

Perrenod shook his head, decisively, and compressed his firm lips into a thin-straight line.

"Folly — utter folly! That's what they expect and you should never do what the enemy expects. What do you value your services at, Mr. O'Toole?"

"Not a whole of a lot, th' way you talk," gloomed the other man. "I hain't got a chanst, th' way you describe it. Not that I'm sayin' you ain't right, Mr. Perrenod—but what kin we do?"

Perrenod regarded him with composure. The very deliberateness of the man, in a way, was consoling to the impetuous Irishman, brooding over confiscation of his legitimate profits, and chagrin at his recent humiliation.

"That, Mr. O'Toole, depends upon how things develop. Frankly, I would not pursue the usual methods of most attorneys. This case is one which calls for much caution and sagacity. Most lawyers, as I watch their work in the courts or hear of it through the papers, work in ruts. It is very natural for lawyers to follow precedents. The judges themselves are great sticklers for following what some other judge has said in a similar case.

"I have always tried to conduct my cases upon what I call tactical lines. A lawsuit to me is like a battle to a general —I'm out to win. It doesn't matter whether or not the other fellow has the most men, or supplies, or whether, for that matter, our case is, from the orthodox standpoint, all bluff.

"It resolves itself down into a question, tactical maneuvering. Sylvestre is a big man—a mighty big man. He built this tunnel and he built this building. In that fact there is the consolation that if we win we can collect. It is better to have a reasonably good case against a client who can pay than to have a cock-sure case against a judgment-proof defendant."

He paused.

Mr. O'Toole, in spite of his obvious intellectual limitations, seemed to grasp the general meaning of what the lawyer had said.

Then the effect of the reassuring remarks faded and his face clouded.

"But you said I didn't have a chanst?" he cried.

"I beg your pardon," very gently replied the attorney. "I did nothing of the kind. I merely tried to point out the futility of the usual remedies—that is to say: either a suit to recover the value of your services to Mr. Sylvestre or a suit against him for assault."

"Well, what kin I do?

"You can give me a retainer of one hundred dollars, sign an agreement to pay over to me one-third of what I shall recover, if anything, and come back in one week from to-day," purred Perrenod.

O'Toole hesitated.

"I do not care to go into a matter of this kind," resumed the attorney, evenly, "unless I am regularly retained and have the assurance of a contingent fee in the event of success which will remunerate me for what I am able to do. Your claim is not, as I have tried to show you, an easy one to collect."

O'Toole fumbled uncertainly at the wallet he withdrew from his pocket.

"What do you think I ought to get from Sylvestre?" he demanded as he paused to glance keenly at the attorney.

"What do you say to ten thousand dollars?"

"Fine!"

The hundred dollars was passed across the table.

"By the way," inquired Perrenod, as O'Toole signed the agreement for the contingent fee and tucked away the receipt for the retainer, "you said Mr. Sylvestre is in his office this morning?"

"He was when that mug t'rew me out!"

"Thank you. I will call him up and have a little chat with him to-day. Come back in one week, Mr. O'Toole."

The client shuffled over toward the elevator shaft. Once outside the dingy office and the spell of the deliberate accents of Mr. Perrenod no longer enchanting him, his spirits drooped. Perhaps, after all, Perrenod was merely after the hundred dollars. He had given up that retainer altogether too easily—it wasn't business. He ought to have asked what methods the lawyer would pursue, especially when he had already knocked the props out from under the usual remedies at law as skilfully as the begoggled attendant in Sylvestre's office had knocked the props from under O'Toole's self-esteem a little while before.

But O'Toole was wrong. His conclu-

sions were erroneous because he did not know Oliver Perrenod. That astute member of the local bar knew that attorneys do not acquire wealth on hundred-dollar retainers—any more than a vendor of shoestrings acquires a million or two with the aid of the cardinal virtues of industry, economy and piety.

Just now Mr. Perrenod was musing over the professional ethics of a certain tactical maneuver he had in mind. He permitted himself a grin—and a grin was as much of a luxury with Perrenod as a genuine solitaire is to a show-girl.

First Mr. Perrenod carefully stripped one of the ten-dollar bills from Mr. O'Toole's retainer. The rest he placed in his watchless watch-pocket. Then he deposited the agreement covering his contingent fee in the small safe in the corner of the dingy office. He locked the strongbox with the same careful precision which a guardian of a safe-deposit vault exhibits at the closing hour.

"It's an awful thing to be a boob!" affably remarked Mr. Perrenod to Mr. Perrenod. "A boob is the one thing in all nature which seems to successfully contradict the theory of evolution. O'Toole is born a boob. So is Sylvestre. There's no collusion between them — that's clear enough now. It makes not the slightest difference that one of them runs a gin-mill and the other a money-mill. Boobs are boobs—no matter what occupation they pursue or what success they attain. In this little tactical experiment, inasmuch as both are boobs, my maneuvers are much simplified—both boobs will do exactly as I desire. O'Toole has done so already, and now Sylvestre will do likewise, although he won't know it until he's hooked."

Whereat, Mr. Perrenod reached languidly for his telephone, and was quickly in touch with Simeon Sylvestre's office.

"This is Oliver Perrenod, attorney at law, speaking, Mr. Sylvestre. My office is in the Sylvestre Terminal Building on the tenth floor."—"Well, Mr. Sylvestre, I want to see you about a claim of a client of mine."—"No, it will not take more than ten minutes and the matter is important enough, I think, for you to give it personal attention."—"Thanks, very much. I'll be down at once."

Perrenod hung up the receiver, rose, donned his hat and sought the elevator. He sent in his card and was soon admitted.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Perrenod," asked the magnate genially.

The attorney cautiously retold O'Toole's story, ignoring the growing frown and the icy stillness with which his words were received. The chilliness of the atmosphere increased but it did not in the least abate the deliberate and quasi-ingenuous manner in which Mr. Perrenod concluded his narrative.

"And so," said he, "my client feels that under the circumstances he has a claim upon you for the sum of ten thousand dollars for services. He retained me this morning after leaving your office and, of course, I deemed it fitting to present the matter to you before taking any action regarding it."

He seemed serenely unconscious of the glare which Sylvestre turned upon him as he concluded.

"I would be glad to be favored with some idea of your view-point of this matter, Mr. Sylvestre," said Perrenod.

His manner was compounded equally of deprecation and dignity, the suave, quiet tone of a man who is doing his best to discuss an unpleasant matter with all regard for the feelings of his antagonist.

Simeon Sylvestre, for all his growing anger, was a man who realized the value of politic behavior. This fellow was trying to blackmail him. But he was an attorney at law. He had not threatened Sylvestre, nor in any way allowed himself to be placed in a position where a personal affront was warranted.

Certainly Simeon Sylvestre had not the remotest idea of permitting himself to be wheedled out of ten thousand dollars—either by O'Toole or his attorney. He was still groping for words with which to make this emphatic when Perrenod's quiet voice again interrupted his thoughts.

"I think I understand your feeling, Mr. Sylvestre. But I also think, on reflection, you will realize that there is another angle from which to view this matter. When you began the tremendous and epoch-making construction of the Mid-Rocky and Tidewater road and followed this up by the tunnel-system and the erection of the Sylvestre Terminal, you, of course, summed up the assets and liabilities of the transaction. O'Toole's claim is, I take it, one of the unsettled liabilities."

A discreet secretary entered with a card just as the magnate turned to bang Per-

renod in the eye, with more good grace than he had thrown O'Toole out of his office that forenoon. When he looked up the attorney had already gone.

Simeon Sylvestre repressed a primitive impulse to pursue and mash the deliberate voiced member of the bar into the granolithic floor of the hall. Instead, he fumed and imagined vain things, then he telephoned his attorneys. One of them, a Mr. Archer, came over within a half-hour. To him Simeon Sylvestre recounted his story and elucidated his exact opinion of Mr. Perrenod and Mr. O'Toole, in language well calculated to erode the varnish on the mahogany wainscoting of the élite offices.

Mr. Archer nodded. "It is simplicity itself," said he. "Call in your confidential stenographer and we'll settle the matter at once."

In the presence of Simeon Sylvestre, who nodded vigorous approval of its clean-cut, unmistakable language, Mr. Archer proceeded to dictate a strong and incisive letter.

"I guess that will settle Mr. Oliver Perrenod's hash," remarked Mr. Archer, with grim satisfaction, when he had concluded. "I'll send this on our own letter-head, register it and mark the envelope 'return receipt demanded.' Then he won't have the shadow of an excuse for further annoying you."

"I'm glad you feel about the matter as I do," bleated his client plaintively. "I can't have every mutt in Rapid City coming up and tapping me for ten thousand at a crack. It has been bad enough as it is."

"I understand you perfectly," sympathetically returned the attorney. "But they have not the shadow of a chance with a claim like this—provided the other men stand pat. You are quite sure of them?"

Sylvestre grinned knowingly.

"Why, if they want to bust open a good thing to help such a boob, where do they head in at?" he queried genially.

"Well, they don't serve champagne and terrapin on the regular bill of fare at the place they'll soon find themselves occupying," admitted Archer, falling in with the other's mood. "I'd forget it, if I were you."

"I've already forgotten it," observed Sylvestre, who was fond of the last word.

Obeying the instructions which had been duly imparted, the stenographer transcribing Mr. Archer's letter to Oliver Perrenod, Esq., duly registered the same at the city post-office and attached the registry receipt to the carbon copy in the files of the law firm.

In due course, therefore, the letter was presented by a tired-looking man with a scraggly mustache and a shoulder which humped far over as he slouched up to the door of the attorney's office in the Sylvestre Terminal.

Oliver receipted for the communication in a clear, round hand. He was particular to write his full name with grave deliberation. Then he methodically opened the envelope, using a keen knife, so as to mutilate the container as little as possible.

Then Oliver Perrenod leaned back in his chair and read and reread the communication with care. From his face it would have been impossible to divine whether he was pleased or the reverse.

Attaching the envelope to the letter he folded it and placed it with the agreement for his contingent fee in the safe, relocking the door in his usual precise, unhurried fashion.

Then Oliver Perrenod betook himself to the law library and examined all the latest advance sheets of legal decisions. It consumed the rest of the afternoon.

Next morning he drew up certain legal papers, thumping the typewriter leisurely, and with frequent pauses during which he stared out at the smoky sky across the bay.

Day after day until the week which he had given Mr. O'Toole expired, Mr. Perrenod pursued the even tenor of his way. He read the law journal on arriving at the office daily; occasionally he wandered over and listened to the arguments in the Supreme Court. On some of these occasions he would shake his head, pityingly, and on others a derisive gleam dawned far down in his keen, gray eyes. The tactics of the opposing lawyers were more than often most crude and even their methods of approaching the judge, in divers fruitless assaults on that fortalice of justice, seemed to him to leave much to be desired.

Promptly on schedule Michael O'Toole appeared.

"I have here a letter which may interest you," said the attorney, after the usual greetings had passed. He rose and procured the document from the safe.

"Before you read it, Mr. O'Toole, let me say I had a talk with Mr. Sylvestre the

day you were here. I put the whole matter up to him in a business fashion, the same way you did to me. I told him that I considered your claim legitimate, and in fact a liability of the great work of constructing the Sylvestre tunnels and terminal, the same as others!"

O'Toole gazed with eyes that betrayed his astonishment at the lawyer's presumption.

"Say thot again!" he demanded.

Perrenod repeated the statement.

"What did he say?"

"Well, Mr. Sylvestre was rather reticent, but you must consider that he was only acting in self-protection. To be entirely candid, Mr. O'Toole, he said nothing at all. But I infer, from this letter, that he was not at all pleased with my mentioning the matter. Read it, please."

O'Toole reached eagerly for the communication:

RASSMUSSEN, KELLY & ARCHER,
Attorneys at Law,
Hewson Building, Rapid City.

OLIVER PERRENOD, ESQ.,
Attorney at Law,
Sylvestre Terminal Building, Rapid City.

DEAR SIR:—

Our client, Mr. Simeon Sylvestre, has asked our advice regarding the alleged claim of one Michael O'Toole, for ten thousand dollars for services.

We have no hesitancy in confirming Mr. Sylvestre's statement to us that this alleged claim is not only mythical in character, but that your client is a plain, every-day, common or garden variety of blackmailer.

In this connection it seems proper to inform you that Mr. Sylvestre not only denies that this O'Toole rendered him any services of any value whatever, but we feel that it is our duty, as Mr. Sylvestre's attorneys, to warn you that any further attempt to press this claim will be met by such legal action as the law authorizes a citizen to take against an attempt to blackmail.

As an attorney you are, no doubt, well-informed of the specific pains and penalties which the law imposes for crimes of this kind. In fact, you were probably informed of them before you presented a claim of this character to a man of Mr. Sylvestre's standing and prestige.

Therefore, if you persist in your nefarious attempts to annoy Mr. Sylvestre with this fraudulent and reprehensible attempt at extortion, we shall not only proceed to send your alleged client up to State prison, where he undoubtedly belongs, but we shall also include you in the prosecution which we shall begin against him.

Yours truly,
RASMUSSEN, KELLY & ARCHER,
By Vernon Archer.

Dic. VA-LJ.

Michael O'Toole wiped a streaming forehead atop a very perturbed face as he handed back the letter. Mr. Perrenod eyed him quietly.

"You see," he mildly observed, "Mr. Sylvestre seems strangely wanting in gratitude for your efforts. He even denies that you rendered him any services whatever."

"I kin lick that tarrier the bist day he iver saw!" he howled, at last, stooping to pick up the overturned chair.

"I have no doubt of it," equably returned Perrenod. "Perhaps you may have an opportunity; but, before we discuss that matter, and now that you have partially relieved your feelings, please read and sign this paper."

He thrust a document and a dripping pen toward the bewildered Irishman.

"This," continued the attorney, "is the summons and complaint in an action for libel which I have taken some care in preparing. It sets up that you are in the business of a retail dealer of liquors and have been for blank years past. That, heretofore, and on or about the blank day of blank, at the special instance and request of one Simeon Sylvestre, you performed certain work, labor and services for said Sylvestre, of the value of ten thousand dollars; that no part of the same has ever been paid; that a demand for the same was duly made by your authorized attorney, myself, on the blank day of blank; and that subsequent to such demand, the said Simeon Sylvestre, knowingly caused to be prepared and uttered a certain maliciously libelous letter, which was thereafter transmitted through the United States mails, in substance purporting to charge you with being a blackmailer; that you have never threatened Mr. Sylvestre in writing or orally; that you have simply demanded what is your rightful due and that he has defamed you, orally and in writing and for which consequent damage to your good name, suffering and anguish of mind, you demand the sum of fifty thousand dollars."

Once more, under the hypnotic spell of the deliberate Mr. Perrenod, Michael

O'Toole signed the complaint; then he went across the hall and swore to it before a notary public.

"Now," said Mr. Perrenod, when they had returned, "you will hear from me as soon as Mr. Sylvestre's attorneys file their answer."

"Can he do anything to us?" asked Mr. O'Toole, in an awed whisper.

The tactics of the deliberate man across the desk were now becoming much clearer than they had been on his previous visit.

Perrenod folded his papers, after preparing the copy to correspond with the original.

"My dear fellow, the presumption of blackmail, which he so flagrantly charges, is an affirmative proposition. As the man claiming that you attempted to blackmail him, *he* must adduce proof in support of that contention against *you*. How is he going to do it? You never saw him but once and he made no reply of any kind to me.

"Blackmail, within the statute, must be shown to be an attempt to extort money under color of an accusation of a criminal character as an alternative. You have never accused Mr. Sylvestre, neither have I. We have both urged on him a certain claim for your services prior to building the Sylvestre tunnel under Rapid City."

Perrenod paused.

"Besides," he continued, "even if Sylvestre is a mutt in some things, he may not be in everything—as he has built railroads, terminals, and a subway worth millions. So, if he charges you with blackmail, he must show that there was something that you could rely on to shake him down. That would be suicide for Mr. Sylvestre."

"Whadde ye mean—suicide?"

Perrenod walked slowly to the window.

"Look out there, Mr. O'Toole. There's the bay. The Sylvestre tunnel runs under Rapid City to the great terminal wharfs at tide-water. Up the other way the Sylvestre-owned Mid-Rocky and Tidewater Railroad runs a thousand miles. The world calls Sylvestre a millionaire. That means he's got money enough to pay our judgment—when we get it. And, we'll *get* it!"

O'Toole's admiration was tempered by the thought of the opulence he must combat and he hesitatingly mentioned the fact that Sylvestre was "a power."

Perrenod laughed, scornfully.

"Let me say this: Sylvestre is a boob—in spite of his millions. I did not have the shadow of a claim on him before we received this letter. I knew this when I talked with him. I was very careful to keep within the law in urging your claim. I defy you or any other living man to show that the city ever passed a resolution of the board of estimate or the Board of aldermen, authorizing the construction of those tunnels. I have studied that fellow Sylvestre as he burrowed through the ground, knowing every time I looked at his work that he was burrowing through the statutes of the State and violating charter provisions of Rapid City.

"He never had a howl from the newspapers, nor from the hold-up artists who go around with their chests out masquerading as the city fathers. Meanwhile—and mark this well—another company, *operating surface railways with the approval and consent of the city and using the city's credit*, couldn't stick a spade into the ground. Why? Because every time they mentioned the matter a thousand howls went up from the throats of certain gentlemen who had not been seen, the way Mr. Sylvestre took care that *his* people should see the same men where his tunnel was to run. That's why Sylvestre, your old chum at school, came to you. That's why he distribute that one hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars. *Sylvestre just burrowed*, and like the boob that he is, he thought no one but the people he'd fixed would ever come upon a trace of his operations.

"I knew I would, some day. That day came when you came in here with your story. But, as I said then and as I say now, you had no proof. That's where the average lawyer would have quit—cold. But I'm not the average lawyer, O'Toole; I realize the value of *tactics!*"

"You've got the other mutts skun a mile!" asserted O'Toole. "Well, I'll go back to drawin' me beer. I guess we won't go up to State prison to-day, Mr. Perrenod."

"Nor any other day," remarked the attorney. "You'll hear from me shortly. Leave your telephone number, will you?"

O'Toole went back to his occupation as a dispenser of brews that cheer—and keep the police-courts grinding out their daily grist. Also, he kept a very close mouth. Two days later he received the phone call.

This time Perrenod took the precaution to lock the door. Then he spread his slender hands on the desk.

"I want to know if you'll take ten thousand dollars to settle your libel suit against Mr. Sylvestre," he asked.

"Sure. When do I git me money?"

"Right now!"

Perrenod counted it out, in crisp new bills, each with the magic "$1000" blazing in the corner.

"Under our agreement, Mr. O'Toole," suavely went on the attorney, "I will retain three thousand three hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents of this. That is correct, is it not?"

O'Toole nodded. It was iron in his soul, but the agreement was in writing, and by this time he knew that Perrenod had a quiet way with him of carrying his point.

"Just sign this receipt, will you?" went on the lawyer, passing over another document, while he counted out the six hundred odd dollars from his own pocket, in exchange for one of the big bills.

"Well, if you ever need my services again, Mr. O'Toole, I hope you'll call on me. Are you satisfied?"

"Oi am. What did Sylvestre say?"

"More than I care to repeat. He's dead sore on you. Says he'll beat you to death the first time he sees you."

O'Toole laughed tolerantly. "We'll see about thot," he remarked as he approached the door. "Well, Mr. Perrenod, you did well wid my case. If Mr. Sylvestre wants to lick me he'll niver git a betther chance in the wor-rld than right now—while I got the price of me fine in me pocket!"

Laughing uproariously, he went out.

"A boaster!" was Perrenod's unvoiced comment, as he delved into another pocket and brought out fourteen more thousand-dollar bills, which he regarded critically.

"Tactics!" he said to himself. "What fools most lawyers are. And most men of affairs, strutting around in ostentatious impregnability — how vulnerable — before persistent tactics! Sylvestre—a millionaire, and a blooming boob! He just burrowed! Not a word to any one except the people he had to keep quiet! And he called me a *blackmailer!*"

He replaced the money in his pockets and moved over toward the window. The bay's horizon was smutting the otherwise beautiful day. The whole panorama of Rapid City's seething life, with its tremendous activities, was spread below the contemplative lawyer's eyes. The wide sweep of it was always inspiring, no matter whether he was flush or in penury.

Here, amid the eternal ferment of vortexing endeavor of his fellow men, Oliver Perrenod renewed his soul. Here, with a grimy sky-line he peered from his dingy office and clutched the food that maintained life. For a half-hour he was submerged in his thoughts.

There was a clatter at the door. Some one stumbled in.

Perrenod turned. A gory figure, with one eye puffed out, collar in ribbons and coat rent with signs of deadly fray, regarded him owlishly.

"I told ye Oi could lick him!" truculently announced Michael O'Toole in a voice thick with teeth. "Oi met him down sthairs. I said: 'Well, ye big sthiff! Ye had to come acrost, didn't ye?' And wid thot, he poked me wan and I poked him back! I poked him all over th' place. He called me a scoundrelly blackmailer—said I'd shook him down for twinty-five thousand dollars! 'Ye lie!' says Oi. 'It was only fer ten.' 'I paid that buzzard upstairs twinty-five not to file thim paappers' he come back and then walloped me agin. But Oi licked him—Oi told ye Oi could! Oi've got a notion to lick you, too!"

Oliver Perrenod regarded him contemptuously.

"If you do," he said with his habitual deliberation, "you'll pay for it. Besides, why should you fight me? Didn't I win your case? You said you'd settle it for ten thousand, didn't you? And you got ten thousand, less my fee, didn't you?"

O'Toole shook his head obdurately and advanced, belligerently.

"Sylvestre said he'd paid you twinty-five thousand. Ye didn't tell me thot!"

"Why should I?" tartly inquired the unmoved lawyer. "Didn't they libel *me* in the letter, the same as they did *you?*"

The fighting Irishman came to a dead stop. The fire in his eyes died away, leaving them cold and lusterless.

"Oi beg yer parding, Misther Perrenod, I niver thought of thot! You're all right!"

He scuffled to the door and vanished.

Perrenod gazed after him with an amused contempt.

"I was right," Mr. Perrenod told Mr. Perrenod, as he turned again to the window. "They were both boobs!"

HANDLING THE HOLIDAY RUSH.

This Year's All-American Yule-Tide Means More Work for the Railroad Man Than Was Ever Loaded Upon Him Before.

TRAVEL WILL INCREASE 25 PER CENT.

The Country's Roads Are Ready for the Traffic with 50,000 Coaches, Which Can Accommodate Some 4,000,000 Passengers at a Time— Chief Train Despatcher Golden's Busy Job at the Grand Central, New York.

BY NEWTON A. FUESSLE.

MERICA'S railroads are facing the job of pulling us through the biggest and severest Christmas fever we have ever contracted.

For this is to be an all-American Christmas. Americans, for once, are all at home together. Travelers who in the past were accustomed to get under the mistletoe in merrie England, or to welcome the *Kristkind* to the strains of "Stille Nacht" in Germany, or to send their friends Christmas cables from Vienna, Paris, the Riviera, or old Egypt, have shelved their steamer-trunks indefinitely.

From former years' lament of nobody home at thousands of almost deserted hearths, the condition has for once been reversed to that of everybody home. The Yankee Yule log will this year cast its glow upon fewer vacant chairs than ever before.

The well-known firm of Christmas & Co., Unltd., which has been doing a rattling business for nearly two thousand years, and which has been compelled to take in the railroads as its junior partners, is right up on its toes and is making final preparations for the biggest domestic season on record.

When the Empire State Express lets out a snort and rushes out of the Grand Central Station for the first heat of its 1915 Christmas week 440-mile dashes to Buffalo in 494 minutes, it will find itself carrying the biggest tonnage of Christmas homeseekers that ever entered its vestibules.

Insufficient Equipment Last Year.

Last Christmas the railroads complained of insufficient equipment with which to get under the load of the holiday traffic. The Interstate Commerce Commission has since granted them permission to institute a $25,000,000 rate increase, which will aid them materially in handling this year's holiday job.

During the feverish week preceding Christmas day the railroads will have to press every available coach, sleeper, diner, café-car, parlor-car, baggage-car, express-car, and mail-car into service. Every wheel will be turning. It promises to be the busiest week America's 250,000 miles of railroad tracks will ever have seen.

Ten years ago it took about 45,000 passenger coaches to carry the Christmas homeseekers to their destinations. This year there are over 50,000 passenger cars available on the railroads of the United States to transport absent sons and daughters to the home base. These coaches, with

a seating capacity of about 25 per cent more than that of ten years ago, can accommodate around 4,000,000 Christmas travelers at a time.

No Holidays for the Railroader.

It is a gold-mounted irony of fate that compels the railroad man to speak of the Christmas "holidays." From the chairman of the board who sits in the vast and solemn throne-room down to the man who tamps the ties December 18 will mean the beginning of a strain that will tax his grit, gumption, and resourcefulness to the very utmost.

There are over 1,700,000 men in the direct employ of the country's railroads. These, workers in the largest single industry in America, will put in a busy week taking care of the Christmas business that confronts them. The railroads, however, are so organized that they are not compelled to call in additional employees even during rush times like Labor Day, the Fourth of July, and Christmas week. They are possessed of a rubber-band flexibility that enables them to respond to the imperious exigencies and demands, whatever they may be. Their normal forces are sufficient, with the possible exception of baggage handlers, parcel-room employees, and the like.

Many Extra Trains Out of Grand Central.

The 400 trains which enter and depart daily from the Grand Central Station, New York, will have to be heavily augmented as Christmas approaches. It is estimated that the New York Central will run no less than fifty extra coaches in and out of the big station on December 24 alone. These, seating eighty-four people each, will take care of 4,200 Christmas pilgrims a day above the normal passenger traffic in and out of this point.

On Thursday night of Christmas week sixty extra sleepers will have to pull out of Grand Central Station to handle the New York Central's business. It will take 125 to 130 extra sleepers to carry the whole additional Christmas business in and out of this busy station for this one railroad.

Thursday of the feverish week will see fifteen extra sections of trains, numbering ten cars to the section, transport the New York Central's Christmas patrons out of New York, while the New York, New Haven and Hartford, which uses the same station, will need 125 extra coaches a day on the heavier days of the traffic, and no less than 75 additional parlor cars, seating thirty people each.

The 75,000 people who use the Grand Central Station per day ordinarily will swell to a throng of 125,000 at the height of the holiday rush, but the station-master has his forces so finely organized that he does not figure on having to increase their numbers to serve the heavy augmentation of Christmas migrants.

Meeting Emergencies on Short Notice.

The traffic magnates have to hold themselves in readiness to throw extra coaches and additional sections of trains upon the tracks at incredibly short notice. Going home for Christmas is largely a matter of the emotions, and the man who felt the pinch of hard times to the extent that he took no vacation last summer, is likely to make up his mind at the last minute, if at all, to grab a train and surprise the folk at home.

Railroading is like chess, and the players are marvelously deft at meeting emergencies with the right move. Chief Train Despatcher Golden, whose desk down at Grand Central bristles with telephones and with mysterious black horns from which issue the voices of his assistants, can keep trains where they are needed most, and out of each others' way, no matter how thick and fast the demand hits the loom of trackage.

As Christmas approaches, the Pennsylvania Terminal in New York City opens wide its pink Milford granite arms, and takes to its thumping bosom its share of Gotham's pilgrims for home. Here, too, there is staged a vivid cross-section of the Christmas rush.

Its 400 arriving and departing trains per day, composed of an average of seven coaches each, will have to be augmented by enough extra coaches and sections of trains to handle the anticipated 25 per cent increase of coach travel. That is to say, the ordinary average of 2,800 coaches in and out of the terminal per day will be increased to around 3,500 a day during the big days of the ante-Christmas crowding. About 100,000 people will crowd the great terminal every day, and half a million will pass in review before the bronze statue of the Pennsylvania's late President Cassatt during the entire holiday movement.

This station expects to handle 10,000 pieces of baggage, including parcels, during the high-water mark of the big week. The ordinary quota of 1,000 baggage handlers will probably be increased to 1,200 to take care of the mountains of Christmas luggage. The station's 150 red caps will have to word hard and fast, and their bright headgear will be an appropriate symbol of the festive period.

The entire Pennsylvania System owns 6,869 passenger coaches, all of which will be transporting celebrants to full capacity. The seating capacity of the system, totaling 327,500, will be taxed to the full.

The full quota of 144 diners and café cars will also be thrown into commission. Two hundred dozen plum puddings, or more, will be ordered by the commissary department at a whack to whet the appetites of the pilgrims for the big dinners at home.

The Pennsylvania Lines, East and West, can accommodate in their diners 5,000 people at one sitting. Each car will carry a $200 food supply. Imagine a colossal establishment, devoted exclusively to restaurant purposes, costing nearly $3,500,000 including all equipment, seating 5,000 patrons at a time, and employing 1,584 servants, and you will have a rough idea of the eating facilities which the Pennsylvania System alone will contribute to hone to a keen edge the appetites of its share of absentees returning to the Christmas board at home.

Few in the Diners on Festal Day.

Yet the railroads, which convey multitudes to the Christmas dinner, themselves serve fewer meals on Christmas day than on any other day of the year. The melancholy few who are compelled to be spinning over the miles on Christmas may find a spray of holly on their menus as consolation for being exiled from home. But their numbers are too meager to warrant the railroads giving them a regulation Christmas dinner.

The volume of express business carried by the railroads during the Christmas rush, strange as it may seem, is no greater than that of a busy period like that of the months of October or November. The express business of Christmas week, however, is entirely sentimental in character, with commercial shipments down to practically nothing. That is to say, the total railway mileage of the express companies, amounting to over 291,000 miles, including Canadian companies, will be carrying Christmas shipments almost exclusively as December 25 draws near.

America's express companies will be transformed into titanic arms of the trunk lines of the country's railways, reaching out for Christmas shipments by rail, and delivering them at their destinations. For every dollar taken in by the express companies the railroads receive between 40 and 50 per cent of it for their share of the carrying, and the two work together in close harmony during the pressure of pre-Christmas events.

Daily Train of 15 Express Cars.

The express companies expect to handle a total of over 100,000 packages per day at shipping centers like New York and Chicago, the great bulk of which, of course, is rushed at once to the railroad stations. To transport this volume of Christmas matter, about 400 express cars will be required each day at these two points.

A train of fifteen cars, carrying nothing but express packages, will leave the Grand Central Station, New York, for the West, every day of the Christmas rush. The first stop will be Detroit, where a car will be dropped. Six cars will be unhooked at Chicago, while others will proceed to Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, *et cetera*.

Another great train of all-Christmas express packages of the American Express Company will proceed south each day during the period, over the New York Central, Lake Shore, Big Four, and Illinois Central lines. This will drop cars at such points as Cleveland, Toledo, Columbus, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Louisville, and New Orleans.

Another train of all-Christmas matter will leave daily over the Lehigh Valley, pulling seven express cars. A train of seven cars will leave daily over the West Shore, while one of eleven express cars will rush Christmas presents every day over the New Haven, dropping cars at Concord, Boston, Bangor, Portland, *et cetera*.

More than 1,200 trucks and wagons, many of the vehicles motor-equipped, will operate for the express companies in New York, and about an equal number in Chicago, most of them hurrying Christmas matter to the railroad stations. In New

York, owing to the better terminal facilities, the regular numbers of express employees will probably suffice for the holiday business. But in Chicago every available vehicle and driver and handler will be hired by the express companies for the task of rushing Yule-time packages to and from the railroads.

Fragile Packages Go into Strong-Boxes.

The bulk of the fragile express packages which are brought to the railroads for shipment are stowed away in great, heavy, reenforced, iron-bound trunks. The express companies own thousands of these, and they are important factors in safeguarding packages of Christmas gifts in transit. Every article over $50 in value is carried in a special "money car," and every such article is carefully checked against the waybills to guard against loss.

The express companies, which collaborate with the railroads in the handling of America's Christmas presents which must be shipped, know that they are in for a decisive test of their strength, resourcefulness, and ability under pressure every time Christmas draws near.

"Christmas time," declares President George C. Taylor, of the American Express Company, "lays the foundation of the good-will of the occasional shipper for the remainder of the year. It places us in the position of the man who must do his best work on a holiday. It separates us from our families. It makes us labor while others rest. We must rejoice at the sight of others' happiness, and I think we do rejoice because our men realize that they are no small means of bringing this happiness about."

The other great teammate of the railroads in the handling of Christmas business is Uncle Sam himself. His contract with the people to deliver their mail leads him to slap an enormous additional load upon the shoulders of the common carriers in the form of Christmas mail.

The approaching Christmas mails will call into service every mail-car owned by the railroads of the country. According to the last official count these numbered 5,800, including full railway postal cars and apartment-cars, but not including baggage-cars carrying mail. More than 300 all-steel or steel-underframe postal cars have been added to the total which bore last year's Christmas mail-bags.

In the last ten years, the volume of Christmas mails that the railroads of the country have transported has increased about twenty per cent. During last year's Christmas holiday period, according to the report of the Postmaster-General, the volume of parcel mail showed a general increase of 200 per cent, while at some post-offices it showed as high an increase as 500 per cent above normal at the height of the pressure.

Preparations have been made to handle an even greater increase this Christmas. So promptly was last year's deluge of mail transported by the railroads that deliveries, almost without exception, were completed before the close of Christmas day.

Ten days prior to Christmas marks the beginning of the extraordinary volume of mail, for then the early birds with letters and parcels destined for remoter sections of the country, begin their mailing.

The world's greatest railway mail-handling center is New York's Grand Central Terminal Post-Office, and here will be staged in a compact area the one most enormous cross-section of America's approaching Christmas tidal wave of mail. Here E. M. Norris, superintendent of railway mail service for New York City, and James Ahern, who is in charge of the terminal post-office, will boss the biggest job of their careers.

New York's Mountainous Mails.

To get a proper understanding of what mountains of mail this vortex of the postal service will receive and discharge, we must pause for an idea of the ordinary business it handles. No less than 800,000 pounds of mail matter are handled here per day, or 53,000 sacks, according to the latest count. This is loaded on and unloaded from eleven exclusive mail trains, each composed of from nine to fourteen solid cars of mail, in addition to 216 trains on which mail is carried in full or apartment postal cars.

Here more than 45 per cent of the mail that arrives in and leaves New York daily is carried on belt and truck and shot through the great chutes. The significance of this fact lies further in the fact that New York City's mail constitutes more than 13 per cent of the entire country's mail.

When Christmas mailing hits the railroads the hardest at the Grand Central,

namely on the day before Christmas, the tonnage handled at this point jumps from 400 to 500 per cent above normal. The New York Central alone figures that it will handle 7,000,000 pounds during the week preceding Christmas, or around 280,000 sacks, counting only that which actually leaves and arrives at the Grand Central Terminal.

About 225 extra mail-cars will have to be pressed into service to carry it. Trucks to the total of 172, forty of them electric, many of them with a capacity of two tons each, will trundle the bulky mail-bags about. There are ordinarily 200 porters on the job in the baggage-rooms, and 25 extra men will be needed to handle the big bags. The 975 government mail clerks who work on the New York Central between New York and Chicago will have to be increased to the tune of 25 men to each division.

The Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, handled 3,500,000 pounds of parcel-post matter between December 18 and 24, last year, while the Pennsylvania Terminal, New York, got under a load of 5,500,000 during the week of the Christmas drive. Both are looking for even more this year. A total of 147 trucks, 35 of them electric, plied to and fro with their loads of mail at the latter terminal last Christmas, and more will be on hand this year if they are needed.

The Postmaster-General reports that there are now 3,507 railway mail routes, covering an aggregate of 231,398.24 miles. This great network of railway mail routes will see at least double, and at some points five times, its ordinary tonnage of mail during the coming Christmas fever.

R. R. Postal Clerks Are 99.98% Efficient.

There are 19,569 permanent railway postal clerks in the government's employ, and 602 acting railway postal clerks, every one of whom will have to face the hardest week's work of his life during the coming holiday period. And these chaps have an efficiency record of 99.98 per cent perfect in the distribution and redistribution of mail, which they may be counted upon to maintain even during the impending Christmas strain. Nearly 2,500 of these postal clerks are assigned to railway terminal post-offices, of which there are now 84, each of which will present a gnarl of unprecedented activity during the big week for which every branch of the railroad service is now carefully preparing.

An idea of the bulk of the Christmas mails of the whole country for the week can readily be calculated from our knowledge that New York's Grand Central Terminal Post-Office will handle around 7,000,000 pounds, and that this constitutes about 13 per cent of the country's total. In other words the Christmas mail of the whole country for the week will aggregate somewhere in the neighborhood of very nearly 54,000,000 pounds.

Student Business Is Gaged in Advance.

The student business is one of the big features of Christmas passenger traffic. Every university, college, school, academy, seminary, and normal school will see an epic hegira for home. This business can be definitely foretold as to volume long before the rush is on. Thirty days before Christmas, the division and traveling passenger agents jump from point to point and aid the local agents in making ready for the student homeseekers. Where a sufficient amount of long-haul business warrants through sleepers are put on.

The student business is a fixed and knowable quantity, and can be made ready for sufficiently in advance to simplify operations. Too, the decline almost to nothing of commercial travel during the pre-Christmas period helps clear the way for the myriad home-goers. Therefore the 25 per cent extra passenger travel during the holidays does not cause too great a human congestion for the railroads to handle.

And in the rare instances when things do not go as smoothly as you could wish, show a little Christmas forbearance to the railroader or mail man. He is doing the very best he can—better, probably, than any one else could do in his place.

Remember he is sacrificing his Christmas merrymaking that yours may be merrier.

Remember the extra hours he toils that you may get to the home hearth the sooner and loaf there the longer.

Remember the added responsibility which he cheerfully shoulders that yours may be a care-free holiday.

And, remembering these things, give him a word of Yule-Tide greeting—just a phrase of appreciation and understanding—even if the train does pull in a little late, or the Christmas package is a little slow in arriving.

RUNNING BY THE RED LIGHTS.

BY HORACE H. HERR,

Author of "Tracer 1313," "'Beat' Woodward's Hold-Up," "The Carbon Copy," "On the Trouble Special," and Others.

No. 3.—Just How It Was That the Fat Engineer Got the Medal for Being "Shot in the Pursuit of Duty."

AKE Lengthy Lewis's word for it, the days of miracles are still with us yet, so to speak. Squatting Ox is a hero. It's the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so 'lp me. Think of an engineer weighing two hundred and ten pounds in his denim pajamas and without his oil-can walking down the street with a hero medal flopping from his rotunda, as it were, and everybody nudging everybody else as he waddles by and whispering, "That's him!"

Just as sure as the hot box is always on the heaviest car in the train, the squatting one went out and threw the switch on a hero medal—and to think he hasn't thrown a switch since he was set up to running an engine!

He's over in the hospital now being fussed over by a black-eyed nurse who would make a man willing to have a spell of anything from ingrown toe-nails to total paralysis of the pay-check just to have her fussing over him. He's actually shot, with a lead bullet in the bay-window just above the belt.

The doctor says that if the bullet had struck him an inch higher it would have passed through his gizzard or some other vital organ. As it is the bullet seems to have torn up the embankments along the alimentary canal and caused a compound fracture in the pocketbook.

Squatting Ox told me that the doctor had made three probes for the bullet, and the only thing he caught was thirty dollars; so he, meaning the squatting one, decided that a few ounces of lead wouldn't be noticed when thoroughly mixed with two hundred and ten pounds of engineer, and they are going to let the bullet rest in peace.

While Squatting Ox can thank the company for the jewelry that he'll be wearing when he gets out of the hospital, he'll have to admit that if it hadn't been for his fireman, "Bugs" Freundlich, there never would have been a front-page story about a brave engineer in the Indianapolis *News*, with a photograph in which as much as one hundred pounds of that two hundred and ten extended over into the next column. And if there hadn't been a story there couldn't have been a hero and a medal and a black-eyed nurse.

The morning before the night it all happened Squatting Ox, with the No. 660, had jerked me and the Brown County Boomerang out of Indianapolis and over the division, and while I wasn't making a special effort to find heroic qualities in my engineer, as I recall the trip now, about the only brave thing he did that morning was to take a chance on a second helping of green-apple pie when he slipped in an extra meal at Lewisberg and then refuse to try to make Woody Point for the varnished busses because he was over his tonnage about a dime's worth and didn't have time to clear, the full five minutes.

We got a stab of only thirty minutes, and of course the despatcher wanted to know why. When I told him we were crowding our tonnage-rating he wired back and asked me if I couldn't set out the engineer and pick up two cars of coal.

I showed the message to the squatting

This series started in the November, 1915, issue. Another will appear next month.

one, and it made him hard-boiled. He was so sore that he ran by the next water-tank and couldn't back up, and by the time he'd run through the siding and pulled half the string back, then run through the siding again and pushed the other half of the train back so that he could spot the No. 660 at the soda-fountain, we'd get another stab of twenty-five minutes and two more wires from the despatcher. I didn't show the last one to my engineer, because it intimated that if we'd put antifat in the tank we might be able to get some place.

We didn't get in on the south end in time to start back that day. When the No. 221 slipped away from the hostler, when he was easing her up to the turn-table, and dropped her tender into the pit, the No. 660 was the only engine that wasn't in the barn. They turned her on the "y" and took her down below the cut-off and told my fat engineer and his fireman that they were to have the honor of riding at the head of a string of Pullmans and mail-cars that night.

It being quite generally understood that a train crew without an engine is as useful as an eating-house without a meal-ticket, I and my brake-twisters were to be given one hundred miles of pay for riding the plush back to Indianapolis, where we would be useful as well as ornamental.

That's how it happened that we were on No. 11. If we hadn't been on No. 11 Squatting Ox wouldn't have had his rotunda punctured, and without that puncture there would have been no hero medal and black-eyed nurse, and I wouldn't have been called upon to buy a dollar and thirty-five cents' worth of bouquet for an engineer who didn't know the difference between a sunflower and a cabbage-blossom.

Anybody can be a hero if he has the right kind of a fireman—and that's where Bugs Freundlich thrusts himself on to the landscape.

Freundlich was a regular tallow-pot. The fact that he was about the only one who ever succeeded in keeping the No. 660 hot is the evidence. But his reputation on the division wasn't based upon his artistic scoop-work as much as it was on his fear of anything that crawled. If you wanted to see him jump across the right-of-way all you had to do was walk up behind him and make a noise like an angry lepidopterous insect. They say that he jumped off the top of the tank once while taking water at Lewisberg, and, when asked what the trouble was, explained that he had heard a caterpillar barking at him from behind a chunk of coal.

Of course that capacity for artistic fright was just peaches and cream for all of us. If we got tied up on a blind siding for an hour we should worry if Bugs was on the head end. Some one would go over and present him with a June bug or a grasshopper, and the moving pictures would begin. I never saw a nickel's worth of *Clutching Hand* in any movie show that could hold a candle to the entertainment we could get out of Bugs by just showing him a creeper.

It didn't have to be the real thing, either. My head shack put a rubber snake in his seat-box one evening just as we were bumping over the high switch in the Indianapolis yards, and when Bugs had washed up and opened the box and found that green-and-gold wiggler curled up in his derby, he let out a yell and went home. When he got home he found he had left that engine in such a rush that he not only forgot his head-gear, but he was shy his other shirt and his best pair of shoes. Bugs gave the call-boy two bits to get the clothes out of the seat-box; and it took the lad a half-hour to convince the fireman that the snake was harmless.

Why, Bugs could scare himself, he was that timid about creepers. The next trip out he took that rubber snake along and when we were in on the siding waiting for a flock of cattle to get by on their way to porter-house steaks, he caught my head shack taking a little shut-eye in the shade of a box car. He pulled that rubber snake from behind the seat-box and, telling Squatting Ox to watch the fun, he started over the tops, intending to drop the wiggler on my shack.

Bugs got to the car all right. He started down the ladder, intending, I suppose, to lay the snake in the brakeman's lap. Bugs wasn't so brave that he would take a good hold on the rubber, and when he was halfway down the ladder the thing slipped from his hand, fell across his own neck, and in his mad effort to get away from it he let go the grab-irons and landed more or less in a lump, twisting one ankle so that he was hobbling about on a cane for more than a week.

There just wasn't anything to it. When Bugs thought a creeper was near him he was gone from you, and you had to be mighty careful how you handled him. All of which may be uninteresting, but it's important, awfully important. It made a hero of my engineer, and I insist that anything that can make a regular hero out of a fat engineer is important. I don't care what it is, if it could be canned and put on the market it would make some one a potful of money.

Squatting Ox has told me a dozen times that every time he gets on a passenger run where he wants to make a record for himself a ball of ivory wearing a conductor's badge gathers into a string all the freight-cars on the division and waits for him on a siding that wouldn't permit two baby-buggies to pass without sawing by.

Nobody expected the squatting one to make No. 11 time with the No. 660, which was old enough to have children in the Soldiers' Home. I suspect that the despatcher would have been satisfied if Squatting Ox went fast enough to keep from being uncoupled from his time-table rights.

By beating her on the back and working one fireman until he had a curve in his back like a link-sausage, Squatting Ox navigated half the division before he had lost an hour on the running time. That brought him into Brown County, where the time was slower on account of the grades and the curves. But at that he'd have made a pretty good showing with his rheumatic teakettle if it hadn't been for the excitement which had a meet order with him at Woody Point.

Woody Point wasn't much more than a few sticks of timber and a short side-track. There was no telegraph station. Just north of it was a deep cut. It was down-hill coming north, and of course Squatting Ox was doing his best to keep the No. 660 from getting run over by the coaches.

He had fully expected to find some ham conductor hanging round the point with about twenty cars sticking out on the main line, and for that reason when he tipped the hog back, one mile south, he wasn't surprised to see a red glim waiting for him.

He called Bugs Freundlich's attention to the red light and 'lowed' as how whoever it was didn't have as much sense as the average conductor, which in Squatting Ox's opinion wasn't any sense at all.

"What's he got his glimmer covered for if he ain't in the clear?" was the question the squatting one asked the fireman; and he added:

"It's getting so any fellow who can operate a sealin'-iron and carry a lead-pencil can get a job running trains on this pike."

Squatting Ox gave the conventional *toot-toot* to let the flag know that he wasn't asleep. It was a short, snappy, spiteful *toot-toot*. It sounded to me, back in the smoker, like cuss-words; and knowing Squatting Ox as well as I do, I know he didn't ease off on that throttle until the very last minute, for he had a habit of running by a flag just as far as he dared.

Knowing that he was due to stop, the squatting one picked up a monkey-wrench with the intent of screwing down a couple of grease-cups. As he did so he was leaning out of the window peering into the darkness for the first glimpse of a train. He was crossing the frog at the south end of the siding when the red light, a few car lengths ahead, began to make a motion like a washout, and the squatting one let his wagons have all there was in the train-line.

If he'd have given a string of empties that much juice he would have jumped the caboose over the string onto the engine-tank. When I felt those brakes go on I came out of a snooze fully expecting to corner the caboose stove, and the only reason I didn't was because there wasn't any such animal in the smoking-car.

I'll have to take Bugs Freundlich's word for what happened over ahead, adding to it a chunk of information that I've picked up here and there.

The fireworks began when Bugs felt something cold "like a snake" touch him in the back of the neck. He was holding the fire-box door open just at that moment. Knowing him as well as I do, I can't help but remark that it was a wonder he didn't jump right into the fire-box. Instead he grabbed G major in the upper scale and, hanging on to it and his scoop, shot out into the night that was drifting by his side of the cab, never hesitating a second to see if he had been tickled or shot.

That fireman felt a creeper on his neck, and he was gone hence, so to speak, and

when a large, overgrown, and coal-dust-covered gent, whose face couldn't be described as frank and open, since half of it was hidden behind a heavy mask, pulled the trigger on small cannon, all he did was shatter a steam-gage, for as Bugs shot off the gangway, dragging his scoop behind him, the shovel caught a very much surprised bandit on the shins and knocked his underpinning out of plumb.

That farewell yell of Bugs's had caused Squatting Ox to pull his head back into the cab. He didn't see Bugs, for the fireman had long since gone, comparatively speaking. What he did see was a strange man in the act of making a dent in the apron with his masked face.

Squatting Ox knew that it was against the rules to permit passengers to ride on the engine, so in less time than it takes to tell it he had dropped his two hundred and ten pounds onto a bandit and was doing his best to comb his hair with a monkey-wrench.

From the looks of Squatting Ox thirty minutes later, he must have had an interesting session there on the engine deck. It was just plain to see that the bandit didn't want his hair combed. While he and my fat engineer were rolling about the gangway there was another shot fired from that cannon. Right there was where the bandit made a fatal mistake.

The minute the squatting one realized that his inner tube had been punctured he just let him have the monkey-wrench on the head, putting behind it all the steam he could force into his cylinders. The result was that the fight ended. Squatting Ox grabbed an extra piece of bell-rope that was hanging above the fireman's seat-box, tied his passenger as to the hands and feet and then began to feel himself to find how much of him had been excavated by the explosion.

Squatting Ox told me that as far as he was concerned, the excitement was all over before the No. 660 stopped. Bugs insists that it had just begun about that time, for when he tried to get away from a flying snake or a June-bug and pulled the pin on himself, he didn't have time to be choice about a place to light. The tallow who had worked the red light had stepped across the track as the engine approached, so that he was on the fireman's side.

Doubtless he was mighty busy waiting for a signal from his friend who had started Bugs on the greatest little scare he'd had in many a day. He wasn't looking for a fireman to come out of the gangway all in one lump, and for that reason when Bugs, still hanging on to a really good scoop, deposited himself, or themselves, as it were, on the flagman's head and neck, the manipulator of the red light didn't know what hit him and he didn't care.

He went down like a ton of brick. If there was any breath left in him when he hit, after Bugs lit on top of him it was knocked out. If the flagman hadn't been knocked silly he would have been surprised at the turn of events; but he couldn't have been as surprised as was Bugs, who was just gathering his energies together for another wild dive when he realized that he was sitting on a human form with a rag around its face.

No one ever suggested that that scoop-artist was afraid of a man. He checked up on what he was sitting on and found that besides wearing a mask it was decorated with two revolvers that were too big to have been hatched out with the current crop of spring chickens; and at its belt were several feet of strong cord.

"I just figured out," said Bugs when he told me about it later, "that that cord was calculated for to keep me and the hoghead out of mischief when the bums had got us covered with them smoke-poles. I knew what to do with that cord already. I tied him up so you could have shipped him seven thousand miles in a pedler-car without being afraid that he would come undone, and jes' as I was tying the last knot, *blooey!* went a cannon from the top of the mail-car right over my head."

Blooey didn't do it justice. I know, because I heard that shot myself; and, take Lengthy Lewis's word for it, it sounded like a ton of dynamite had let go.

Old Man Heady, who was punching pasteboard on No. 11 that night, had come through the smoking-car on his way toward the head-end to see why Squatting Ox had spiked the train. Feeling pretty certain that one fat engineer was going to get a real bawl-out, I thought I'd be among those present when it come off, and I followed Heady through the smoker, down the steps and onto the ground. I was going to follow him all the way to the engine, but I changed my mind.

That lantern of his attracted more than the bugs. When I heard a noise like a cannonade I remembered that I was just deadheading that trip, and I didn't have any excuse for cutting in on the official business connected with running the train. When I heard that *blooey* noise I decided to go back and see if the rear end was protected. It doesn't make any difference to this conductor what happens on the head end of a train, I believe in protecting the dog-house.

I don't know how long it took me to get back to the rear vestibule, but I'm willing to bet money that I did my best. I heard another shot fired, and while I was running the length of the last Pullman I heard a noise like a mosquito right behind me. If I'd slowed down, that bullet would have hit me in the back, for when I ducked around the end of the last car I heard it—meaning the bullet of course—going on down the right-of-way.

I couldn't begin to figure out what was going on over on the head end, but I felt sure that whatever it was I hadn't lost any of it.

For about ten minutes I protected the tail-lights of that passenger-train; but when I heard four or five shots fired in rapid suction, so to speak, I boosted myself over the drawbar and the back railing and knocked on the Pullman door with my foot—gently, so as not to awaken the passengers.

About the second time I knocked the porter showed and unlocked the door.

"What chu-all tryin' do—bust this here doo' down Don't chu-all know—"

"That's all right, Sam," I interrupted. "I know there's a bunch of train-robbers coming through this train from the head end—there. Listen! Hear that shooting?"

Sam, if his name was Sam, went. He didn't exactly went, either; he just disappeared. By the time I got into the aisle between the berths all I could see in the dim light was too large feet disappearing beneath a curtain. They may have belonged to Sam. I think they did, but I didn't stop to see.

I wandered over toward the smoker, taking my time, you might say, and as I didn't meet any excitement coming back, I kept wandering until I could peek through the chair-car door.

The smoking-car was as peaceful as the front pew on prayer-meeting night; so I ventured in, took my seat, and went on about my business of deadheading.

About five minutes later old man Heady came in, acting as excited as a fireman on a pay-day morning.

"Lengthy Lewis," he says, "can you run an engine?"

"Why?" says I, not caring to incriminate myself until I knew what I was charged with.

"Squatting Ox is shot," says Heady. "We've got two would-be train-robbers over in the baggage-car."

Leave it to Lengthy Lewis to sign the tissues when duty calls him! Sure I could run an engine. I used to make my living that way until I found out that you always find the brains of a train in the caboose, and then I moved back to the dog-house.

When I went over and crawled onto the No. 660 I found Bugs already there with the blower on. The steam gage wasn't working right because that bandit person had used it for target practise, so we keep enough water in the old mill to have floated her in.

Things were pretty much mussed up on the No. 660. There were four holes in the roof of the cab and Bugs had a black eye, and his left driver wasn't working just as it should. Between the two of us we managed to get No. 11 into Indianapolis no more than four hours late, which made it considerable after sunup.

Judging from the crowd that was gathered in the train-sheds, you would have thought we had a candidate for the Presidency aboard who would give a five-minute talk. They rushed Squatting Ox through the cheering multitude to an ambulance and they took two near-bandits from the baggage-car and loaded them into a patrol-wagon that had wire on it like the monkey-cage in the circus.

Bugs and I were washing up at the roundhouse before I had a real chance to talk to him.

"What happened?" I asked.

"Well," said Bugs as he leaned over the water-bucket he was using for a wash-basin, "something touched me on the neck, cold like a snake, and I jumped. I didn't mean to jump off the engine already, but I did, and I lit on that little fellow whom you saw them taking away in the Black Maria.

"It knocked him cold, and when I had

him tied I sneaked back to the engine, where there had been a lot of shooting. I had taken the little fellow's guns, and I thought Squatting Ox might need some help, so I went back careful like and peeked over the deck. There was my engineer sitting on that other fellow's back, shootin' holes in the top of the engine-cab, and that's all I know about it."

There had been a third and possibly a fourth man in the masquerade party. One of them had taken a shot at Old Man Heady from the top of the mail-car, and as usual that bullet came near getting an innocent bystander, meaning that if Lengthy Lewis hadn't outrun it he too would have been a hero.

They kept me pretty busy on the daily pedler for two weeks after the Woody Point affair, but I found time to send that dollar and thirty-five cents' worth of fancy horticulture out to Squatting Ox and to call up the hospital every other day to find out how my fat engineer was getting on. I learned by the papers that our two friends of the hidden countenances had been identified as members of the Broad Gang and that there was a standing reward of five hundred dollars each for their capture.

The papers weren't saying much about Bugs Freundlich, and he didn't seem to be worrying about it. He didn't miss a single trip all the time Squatting Ox was in the hospital. The day I read the story about the reward money I decided to speak to Bugs about it, knowing that he was entitled to half that prize.

I brought the subject up when we were getting in an extra meal at Lewisburg one morning.

"I see there's some reward money coming on the capture of those two bandits," I began. "You want to look out that that fat engineer don't take your share of it."

Bugs washed down a gob of egg-sandwich with a swallow of coffee, kicked me on the shin, and winked.

"I'm looking out for that money already," he said. "I was out to the backshops where they got Squatting Ox last night, and we've fixed it up. You know the company is going to give him a hero medal already, made out of gold."

"They are going to give Squatting Ox a medal!" I exclaimed. "Where do you get in? Didn't you hero some, too?"

"That's all right," said Bugs. "Me an' the hoghead's got it fixed. He's to have the medal and be a hero and I'm to get the money. I should be a hero when I can get five hundred dollars more keeping my mouth shut!"

The very next trip into Indianapolis I went out to call on my punctured engineer. He was in bed, his head propped up so he could see over his rotunda, which, covered by a nice white bedspread, made you think of a snow-bank. The nurse showed me into the room, and Squatting Ox spied me the minute I was in the clear through the door.

"S-sh!" he whispered, holding up a warning finger. "Don't say a word. Come over here."

I stepped over to the bed. The squatting one looked about the room to be sure that no one heard.

"I'm a hero," he said gravely. "I'll let you shake hands with me, but I'm a hero just the same, and don't get the idea that you can get too familiar with me after this when you meet me on the street. I want you to take your hat off and show the proper respect for your superior when we meet in company.

"I'm going to have a medal; maybe they'll put a bronze tablet on the No. 660 commemorating my deeds. 'Thomas Arbuckle Brown,' it will say, 'engineer. Shot in the pursuit of duty.'"

"I was wondering," I said, "just where that bullet hit you. Is it very painful to be shot in your pursuit of duty?"

"Painful!" the squatting one repeated. "Why, man, they wouldn't let me eat anything for forty-eight hours! I should say it was painful! But I've done my duty—"

"Yes, and you've done about everybody else on this division," I interrupted. "I suppose you'll be grabbing all that reward money and charging Bugs a per cent on every trip he makes for the high honor of riding in the same cab with you."

"S-sh!" said Squatting Ox, "Don't get so loud. Some one 'll hear you. I've fixed it up with Bugs. He's going to be a common fireman and keep his mouth shut, and get all the reward money. I'm the engineer, and I get to be a hero and wear a medal because rather than permit a train-robber to hold up my train I fit. With nothing but a monkey-wrench I sprang at the villain even though he had

me covered with a revolver that had a muzzle as big as the front end of the No. 660, and—"

"Wait a minute," I interrupted. "Don't try to unload that on me. You know I've been traveling this pike with you for quite a spell, as it were. I know you better than you know yourself; and besides you never heard of a hero weighing two hundred and ten pounds. You can shove that four-flush down another load; I'm not taking any of it on my train. Don't you think it.

"What I want to know, Squatting Ox, is this: Why didn't you jump out of that cab? Why didn't you jump? Why? Answer me that, now."

"S-sh!" said Squatting Ox peevishly. "You ain't deliverin' a stump speech. Can't you let me hero a day or two in peace? You ain't jealous, are you, Lengthy? I've been shot, and I'm awfully nervous, so don't talk so loud. Why didn't I jump? You big boob, don't you know that I'm six inches bigger than the cab window, and that bold, bad man was spread out over the engine-deck so I could not get to the gangway?"

"A fat chance to jump, you might say," I suggested.

"A fat chance," Squatting Ox repeated. "So I had to stay in the cab and be a hero and get shot in the pursuit of duty. 'Squatting Ox—Hero.' That's the way I sign myself these days."

For a time I contemplated the future in silence. I couldn't help but wonder how on earth I was going to get along with a hero on the head end, wearing a medal on his pursuit of duty where he was shot. You can take Lengthy Lewis's word for it, it wasn't a cheerful prospect—not by any means.

"I'm going to turn in that fireman," said Squatting Ox after a long silence. "I've got to do it. Some time a real bug is going to light on him, and in his dive to get away like as not he'll just wreck the No. 660, and I'd be a fine-lookin' hero without the No. 660. Why, I couldn't be just a common engineer without an engine!

"I tell you self-preservation is the first law of nature, even if it ain't in the Standard Book of Rules. That boy's too nervous. If he'd 'a' stopped to see what was touching his neck he'd never have jumped, and if he hadn't jumped I would not be in here having my flues calked."

"And if he hadn't jumped," I said as I edged my way to the door, "he wouldn't be wondering how he will spend that reward money, and when the call-boy sticks the book under your nose the next time you wouldn't be able to sign it 'Squatting Ox—Hero.'"

THE LEVEL-HEADED BOSS SAYS:

THE best man is not he who never makes mistakes, but he who never permits them to daunt him, who accepts no failure as final, who rises wiser every time he falls, who has ever the soul's fine courage to begin anew.

FROM THE RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE.

SPIKE MALONE—BRAKEMASTER.

BY JOHN C. RUSSELL.

No. 27.—Spike Quits His Natural Vocation of Firing to Become a "Shack"—But Never Again!

"RUSTY," said Spike Malone, "did you-all ever know that wunst upon a time I performs as a trainman, stinger, or shack, denominate 'em as you so desire? No? Well, I did! And, believe me, I was some shack, too, take it from me!

"To me it's a real painful aspect of this free-for-all railroad game in which we pastime for our three per to witness the hostile attitude some of us enginemen cherish toward our colaborers who wield the brake-club and lantern. To hear some engine-men declaiming now and anon you derive notions extremely derogatory to shacks in general and that particular bunch just at the moment under discussion in particular. Not but what the said shacks don't nourish sentiment a heap similar toward those enginemen, 'cause they most certainly do!

"But, believe me, Rusty, it's one thing to sit on your seat-box and sulfurously flay the actions of your train-crew when shuffling cars about a bit, and a horse of a totally different shade to get out there and juggle the switch-list yourself. You have my word on it—the unbiased word of an *hombre* that knows!

"This intrusion of mine into hitherto unfamiliar realms occurs down on the Espee where that festive pike meanders over the mountain-passes of Arizona and the same provides me with an illuminating episode regarding my ignorance from which I just nacherally date time. As a specimen of 'bone-headus-extremus' I sure discount any corn-field sailor that emerges from out the wilderness and gets took worse with railroaditis. As a sample of idiotic greenness I'm shorely aces up before the draw.

"WHEN MR. CALLER YANKS ME OUT OF MY SLUMBER TO TAKE AN EXTRA EAST, I'M ALL ORGANIZED FOR HIM."

"Jobs are so all-fired scarce those days that I get footsore and weary hunting one down. Moreover, from missing out on meal-times I'm ganted down to a shadow of my wonted self. So when I get a shot at a job of braking I make a wild scramble to land same. The lies I foist off onto that worthy trainmaster shorely make me blush later, but I succeed in convincing him that as a past-master brake-

"'WELL, WHY IN THE SO-AND-SO BLAZES DON'T YOU GET BUSY AND KICK THEM OFF?' THE CON HOLLERS. 'DO YOU-ALL EXPECT TO KEEP US HERE ALL NIGHT A WAITING ON YOU?'"

man I'm there with bells on, and he puts me to work instanter. And just as pronto my troubles commence.

"On the strength of having my monniker on the pay-roll I get jawbone for bed, board, 'bacco, and an outfit of working-togs, so when Mr. Caller yanks me out of my slumber to take an extra east I'm all organized for him. After feeding I mope up to the roundhouse track, a nice new lantern gaily adangle and a shiny tin badge adorning the front of my cap. Being the youngest man called thataway, I'm nacherally the headmost brakeman and it's up to me to bring the pig around through the yard and tie her onto the train.

"I find a nice, shiny 2700-class hog awaiting for me and a hogger appertaining to the same who waxes exceeding wroth as I climb into the cab and inquire if this here is the extra's engine that was called for 10.30 P.M.

"'Tis that,' he declaims; 'though from the time it takes some of you shacks to drift around here after your engine it looks like it might be ordered for some time next week! Git out there and lemme onto the lead! We're ten minutes late on the call right now!'

"'All right, you old fossil!' I hand him back. 'I'll do that same. Also, permit me to observe that if you-all forget to search out your hand-oiler and go to poking run-fast into the vitals of this slam-pound every time we stops we easily get this ten-minute deficit back in no time at all!'

"And with that I swing down out of the cab, leaving him with his mouth open and one foot in the air while the fireboy snickers.

"Having thus exchanged repartee with this greasy head mechanic, I heave over the switch and hand him a 'come-ahead' token, plumb gala and confident. And come ahead he does, some sudden, and before I realize what transpires he is romping gaily through the switch, which was right in the first place and which I throws wrong while indulging in my little gloat.

"There being no light on it, the hogger doesn't sense anything wrong, so I coon the pilot-step and allow I'll let her go as she lies. Anyway, I'll be miles out of town when some worthy comes backing in there and horns into a mess of grief, so I should anguish about it!

"I get him back against the train without further mishap, couple him on, and sit down on a handy tie to twist up a paper pipe when this conductor person blows up and demands have I kicked off the binders as yet? I totally overlooked that important fact—not knowing anything about it in the first place—so I tell him, 'Not yet.'

"'Well, why in the so-and-so blazes don't you get busy and kick them off?' the con hollers. 'Do you-all expect to keep us here all night a waiting on you? Git them brakes off and hustle up to that main-line switch and be ready to line up for us to git out when those mangy car-

toads git the wind tested! *Hump* yourself!'

"As this conductor is a large, husky person with an undershot jaw and a fist like a No. 4 scoop, I conclude that obedience is the better part of valor, so I coon the head car, looking for set binders. I found 'em, too. The first one I set a club into is tighter than beeswax and I have to heave on her from who laid the chunk.

"Then when I git a mite of slack and kick the dog out the durned wheel grabs my club in its teeth, emits a low, harsh growl, and endeavors diabolically to sling me off that car and into the adjacent township. Man! For a minute or so we shorely go round and round on that car-roof!

"I'm leary of the next one and go at it and the balance of 'em kinder cautious and easy like, when here comes a growl from my friend, the con:

"'Goin' to be up there all night, my bucko? Shake a leg and git to that main-line gate, 'cause old John is whistling off right now! Hustle!' says he.

"And, loosing the last brake, I do a scrambling slide down the side-ladder and hike out in a tall sprint for the switch as the 'gine coughs her first exhaust, slips her first few revolutions and starts the drag out of town.

"I beat 'em to the gate by an eyelash, let them head out onto the main line, and then squat down to watch brake-rigging and such like as they drag by in a manner I shorely deem highly professional. I'm so dad-blamed interested over this caper that I near overlook my hand, 'cause when I come to myself I see this string of rattlers is percolating past me at a gait which makes a catching of them loom up in my novice eyes as a feat both perilous and mighty difficult of accomplishment. All the same, nerved by visions of what my rough-neck car-captain inflicts on me verbally if I stop 'em to climb aboard, I decides to make the riffle.

"I grab a deep breath, drape my glim around one arm, pull my cap down good and tight, and start a Marathon up the track alongside the string. And right there is one highly nervous feat! To go ambling along on a high run in the pitch-dark, your right foot knowing not whither goeth your

"MY TRUSTY LANTERN AND I COME AROUND AG'IN' THE SIDE OF THAT BOX CAR LIKE SLAPPING A HANDFUL OF WET MUD ON THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE."

left and your eyes, fastened on the string of cars you are racing, unable to dispense any information to your pedal extremities, doesn't appeal to me as any light and frivolous form of entertainment.

"After I have seemingly sprinted for a mile, along comes a car with a stirrup-iron low enough to attract my fancy, so I make one wild, despairing grab for the hand-iron and connect with a death-grip and an agile hop for the step with my foot—and misses!

"Gentlemen, hush!

"My trusty lantern and I come around ag'in' the side of that hard, unfeeling box car like slapping a handful of wet mud on the side of the house. My arms are near torn from their sockets, my wind goes soughing out into Arizona's atmosphere, my bones creak, and I fetch my head a belt that makes every bone in my skull overlap its neighbor, and the echo therefrom makes me deaf for a week. I just hung onto that grab-iron and fluttered in the breeze like a dish-rag on a line.

"By and by I scrape back enough nerve to crawl in onto the ladder and scramble onto the car-top, where I lay me down and pant like a pup. Man, I was shore scared! But here I was some twenty cars from the motive power, where I rightly belonged, and those same cars, high ones and low ones, rambling along the steel in one-time. Next problem was to force my shaky legs to propel me over these swaying, swinging, jumping car-tops to where the light from the fire-door showed my haven awaited. Some problem, too!

"I horse myself to my feet and go prowling over cars with the nimble grace of a hippopotamus chasing butterflies; up and down end-ladders that tried to tear themselves out of my hands, and over cars that jigged under my feet and jounced me around like corn in a popper. I negotiated the last two cars on hands and knees, old John having struck a sag and making a high-daddy for the other hill.

"When finally I crawl over the coal and fall onto the apron I heave a thankful sigh of relief. I'm on familiar ground once more, and sabe complete, from personal observation when firing, the exact nature of a brakeman's duties on an engine. So I immediately proceeds to perform said duties. I crawl up on the tallow's seat-box, hang my feet on the window-ledge, and roll me a smoke.

"Then I gaze on the smoky-boy where he vibrates from coal-pile to rat-hole.

"'Go to it, old socks,' thinks I. 'Slave on! Once I, too, swanked and sweated even as you. But now I ride in envious ease!'

"This repays me a heap for my tribulation in getting on and over to the mill. Right there, in the midst of my rosy dreams, it happens. Old John happens to look back, for a wonder, and in comes his head, boiling with bad words as he shuts off, drops her into the oil-cans, and winds the Westinghouse into her. When we stop I wax inquisitive and inquire why-for. Old John snorts:

"'Why? Why, you dad-blamed ornament, you, look your train over around these curves once in a while, won't you? Mebbe if you-all conscend to do so you notice we have a housing about half-way back that's about to set the woods afire right now!'

"And shore enough he's dead right. I search out a tank-bucket full of water and a couple of packing-hooks and stumble down along the train to the scene of the conflagration. Whilst I'm dousing the conflagration and fiddling around in the box with my packing-hooks, as wise as a tree-ful of owls, up blow the con and the hind man and they decide it's a case of brass the car.

"Talk about a fireboy working!

"Rusty, I lug brasses and buckets of dope from the crummy and return for a Keely, a jack, and a bar, and pack them ahead, too. Then I pump mightily on that bar, a jacking that journal up, until my eyes pop. Finally we get her rebrassed, packed, and decorated with the Keely, and I garner in my tools and hike out for the 'gine.

"Nothing superextraordinary transpires for some miles, so I begin to achieve a notion that maybe I'm some brakesman after all, when old John hoots at me and gives me a token that he desires to head in at the next siding. Well and good! When he slows down sufficiently I drop to the ballast and race for the target.

"Being in a man's-size hurry thataway, my switch-key sees fit to butt into the game, and I wind feverishly on the same, like winding an eight-day clock before the wards catch and the lock springs. I just manage to get the gate over as old John shoves his ponies onto the points. All this

time I'm aware of more or less language emanating from outen the cab, but attribute the same to peevishness on the part of John, account my tardiness in getting the gate, until when the engine gets about a car-length into the switch with the straight-air chewing fire out of the tires as the train shoves her along, here—*blam* comes the emergency as John slams her into the big-hole and halts the procession some abrupt.

"'You copper-riveted jassax!' yells old John, standing up and chewing hunks out the window-frame in his frenzy. 'You three-ply idiot! Are you-all aiming to put me on the ground for keeps?. There's a derail in here, dawg-gone it!'

"And shore enough there was when I came to look for it—just about under the pilot, too. I heave her from off the rail, John hands her a capful of steam, and we proceed to roll into clear. With the switches locked I begin to feel a little better over my bull, there being no serious damage done to anything except my hogger's tender sensibilities, when here comes my bold and burly car-captain a ravening up the head end and ties into old John.

"'Sa-ay! You condemned old relic! What in the so-and-so are you aiming to do —kill all hands?' he shoots at John.

"Old John grinned.

"'Go and talk to this here animile you foist off onto me as a head brakeman! He heads me in on to a derail and plumb forgets to throw it so I have to wipe the gage to keep from climbing off out into Pima County! Go and saw off your mess of grief onto him! Any damage done?'

"'Damage!' howls our con. 'Damage? The insides of the crummy is all piled up ag'in' the front door. My hind man shoves his head through a front cupalo window and I wish you'd look at this lump on my dome where the stove and I do a tango together!

"'Damage! Lemme at that brakeman!'

"And with that he starts down outen the cab. But little Spike has vamosed. I recollect I'm supposed to look my train over once in so often and decide now's the time I do so. He starts down one side and I take the other; when he crosses over I promptly do the same, and so we play hide and seek until the varnished cars roll by and I let the string onto the main line and coon the engine again. At that, with a solid train-length between me and him, I don't feel any too brash over the deal.

"Next stunt happens about two miles out of the siding.

"First thing I know we are shut off and the air is on and we roll down to a stop forninst an automatic block boasting a deep, bright red light. Old John whistles out a flag behind and then—*whoo! whoo! whoo! who-o-o-o!*—three short and a long. It's me for the little red lamp and my

"UP BLOW THE CON AND THE HIND MAN AND THEY DECIDE IT'S A CASE OF BRASS THE CAR."

flares, and hit the grit as John and the worthy tallow-pot hand me the condoling grin. Out in front of the 'gine I plod my weary way, stumbling over rock-ballast and a cussing high, wide, and handsome. Of course there's no other train in the block—the signal has just gone flooey, that's all; but according to the rules in such case made and provided we have to flag the block until we reach a clear signal of discover the cause for this crimson display.

"In this case I hike a solid four miles before I catch a friendly gleam of green from the next block, and thankfully hand John a high-ball to come ahead with the lion-wagons. Once back in the warm cab I proceed to reconstruct my previous ideas as to the shack's bed-of-roses life. I have accumulated ample data otherwise.

"But the stunt, the banner stunt, occurs at Wilcox, where we head in next, and I cover myself with glory, no limit.

"I head 'em into the yard without mishap, and as soon as we get stopped here comes the worthy brother from the hind end with a switch-list in his hand and a cheerful grin on his mug.

"'Got to set out a few here!' says he. 'Cut behind C. and O. 177365 and pull 'em down to clear the lead,' which same, after prospecting back some twenty cars to find my cut, I do. Then here comes my partner.

"'One out; one back, and then six out and shove the rest on to the train.'

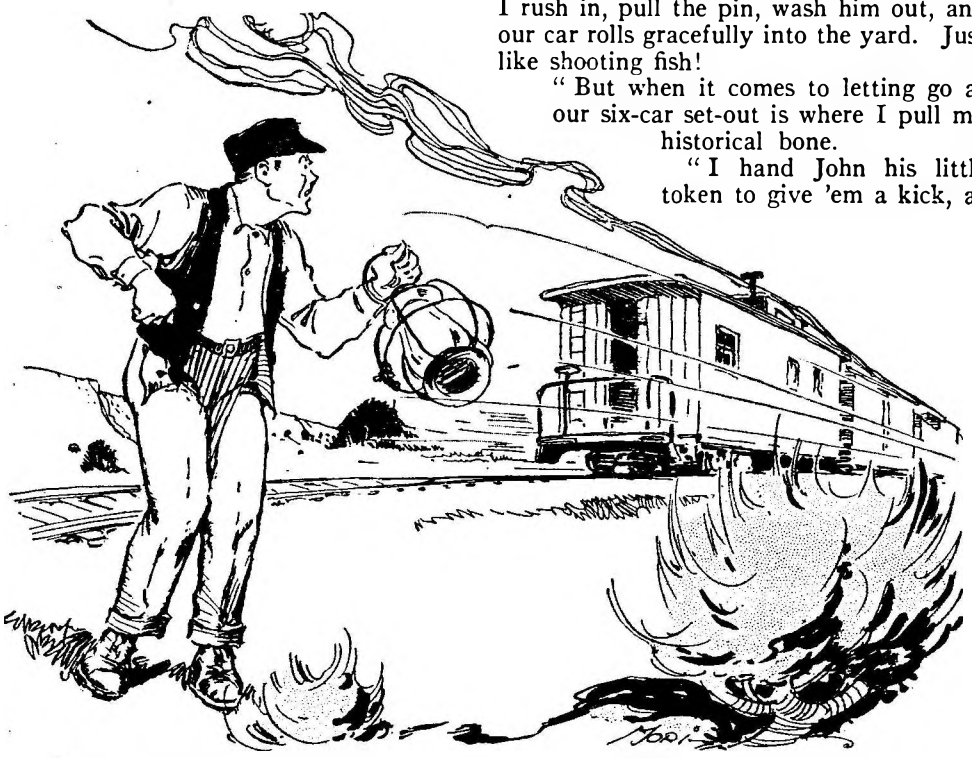
"While his jargon is some over my head, it finally percolates into my skull just what he wants; simple enough too. So I proceed to hand our hogger a wild and lurid high-sign, and here he comes like a house afire. I rush in, pull the pin, wash him out, and our car rolls gracefully into the yard. Just like shooting fish!

"But when it comes to letting go at our six-car set-out is where I pull my historical bone.

"I hand John his little token to give 'em a kick, as per usual, and run in to yank the lever and pull the pin; but nothing doing! The lever don't hickey properly. My mind full of cutting those six loose, I perpetrate an act which subsequent fill me plumb up with awe at its colossal asininity. What do you-all allow I do?

"Rusty, listen!

"I hop nimbly up between the cars, place a foot on each draw-bar, bend down with both hands—*and lift that pin!* Imagine it! I give you three guesses as to where I'd 'a' been if John had set his jam and stopped 'em about that time! Can you best it! Me, Spike, Malone, wise guy!



"BEFORE I CAN GET OUT A MATCH TO REVIVE MY GLIM, THE CRUMMY WHISTLES PAST."

"Just then like a flash it comes over me what I'm doing and the way I turn loose of that pin and claw desperately for foothold and hand-hold on something solid was a sin and a shame. About then John stops 'em!

"Comes a great clatter and a banging, a pop like a toy balloon busting from somewhere ahead, and much cussing from the hindmost shack, who is in a position to witness the extent of the calamity.

"What transpires? Aw, nothing much. Seeing we've bled what cars we intend to kick in, there's no manner of brake on 'em, so when John slams the air under the balance the non-airs endeavor to continue their flight. As I don't pull the pin, for good and sufficient reason like I elucidated a bit ago, our six loads we were aiming to cut loose come back ag'in' the air-cars with the brakes set like the crack of doom and just neatly extracts a draw-bar—from the wrong end of a car, too, at that. Much excitement!

"My partner and I lug chains until we're blue in the face, get our cripple tied up and set out, couple up the train, and are ready to go at last.

"Says he to me: 'Catch the crummy, pal; there's a pot of hot coffee on the stove if old John hasn't kicked it off yet!'

"After my strenuous exertions, coffee shorely listens mighty good to me, so I allow to do just that. As John whistles off and starts out of town I watch my train pull by for broken brake-hangers and the like until I perceive John is high-daddying out at a mighty peart gait. By the time the crummy heaves in sight it's a bed-rock fact that if yours truly is a going to catch on he's a going to need wings—nothing less; so I start in to swing him down in great shape. The first pass I make—out goes my lamp!

"Before I can get out a match to revive my glim the crummy whistles past, whisks around a curve with a last derisive flicker of her tail-lights, and here is little Spike regarding the fathomless Arizona night—and little of anything else.

"On second thoughts I didn't care so much, as I warn't anyways anxious to interview that husky car-captain after my frolics of the night.

"But I did sorter hate to lose out on the Java!"

FIRST MAN TO WIRE TRAIN ORDERS.

WHEN we write down the list of Vermonters who have blazed the way in important changes of world-wide influence, says the Brattleboro *Reformer*, we should remember Albert H. Copeland, a native of Middlebury, who died recently in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In 1852 railroads had no telegraph service of their own. Trains were operated wholly by time-card rules, which provided that one train would wait at a certain station until another train had passed. If one train was late at the meeting-point the other was required to wait twelve hours or until the other showed up.

Such a condition existed on the winter morning in February, 1852, when the first telegraphic train-order flashed over the wires. The north-bound train, due to meet the south-bound train at Middlebury, was in a snow bank in the Green Mountains south of Rutland. Mr. Copeland, who worked in the post-office at Middlebury at that time, was also the local telegraph operator.

The conductor of the south-bound train was, of course, unaware of the stalled train south.

As the length of delay increased, the restless, irritated passengers grew bold and wandered uptown from the depot. Some of them straggled into the post-office and happened to tell Copeland of the delay. The operator said:

"You bring the conductor up here and perhaps we can fix it so that you can go on to Rutland without waiting for the north-bound train."

The conductor demurred, but finally acceded to the demand of his irate passengers.

Upon arrival at the post-office Mr. Copeland handed him a message from his superintendent at Rutland. It read something like this:

> North-bound train in snow-bank south of here. You come on down to Rutland and I will not let any train go north until you arrive.

Mr. Conductor read his order, looked Copeland straight in the eye and said:

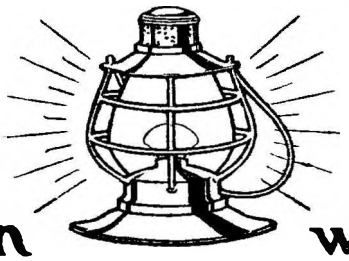
"I am afraid to do this. I might be taking a chance. How do I know it is genuine?"

Copeland quietly replied: "I'll ride on the engine to Rutland."

That settled it, and the train went on its way, the passengers rejoicing and heartily thanking the operator, who kept up a wonderful amount of thinking while quietly sitting in the cab from Middlebury to Rutland.

Mr. Copeland's happy thought resulted in the despatching of trains by telegraph over the Rutland Railroad after that date. The method was quickly adopted by other railroads and eventually came into use throughout the world.

By the Light of the Lantern



Ask us what you want to know

WE want to be as useful as possible to our readers, but, because of the great popularity of this department, we are obliged to impose certain restrictions. It is limited to the answering of questions of an informative, technical, or historical nature only. We cannot answer requests for positions or give information regarding employment. All letters should be signed with the full name of the writer, as an indication of his good faith. We will print only his initials. The editor begs that readers sending in questions will not be disappointed if the answers do not appear as early as expected. It frequently takes weeks to secure correct answers, owing to the complexity of the questions. All questions are answered free of charge. The editor earnestly requests his readers to bring immediately to his attention any errors they may find in this department.

ON a train is it positive or negative air-pressure that sets the brake-shoes in contact with the wheels; and if positive how does a broken train stop itself?

(2) What is a split switch?—T. J. S., Brookline, Massachusetts.

The terms positive and negative are not used in connection with air-brake operation, or are not generally accepted as air-brake nomenclature. However, we can advise you that compressed air is the source of power employed in air-brake operation, and the reason the broken train stops itself is that the brake is automatic in its operation.

In making an application of the brake, a cylinder under the car is filled with compressed air, the maximum pressure employed ranging from 50 to 105 pounds per square inch. The power developed by the cylinder effective on a movable piston is multiplied by and transmitted through the foundation brake-gear to pull the brake-shoes against the wheels.

Compressed air from the locomotive is admitted to a line of pipe throughout the train, and each car has an operating-valve usually termed a triple valve and a storage reservoir for compressed air. The flow of compressed air from this reservoir to the brake-cylinder and from the brake-cylinder to the atmosphere for a release of brakes as well as from the line of pipe to this reservoir is controlled by the triple valve.

The air enters the reservoir through a small feed groove and reservoir and brake-pipe pressure are balanced on the sides of a movable piston. The pressure in the reservoir may be said to be trapped—that is, a reduction in the pressure in the brake pipe reduces it below that in the reservoir, and the triple valve piston is moved, and as the movement takes place the reservoir pressure instead of flowing back into the brake pipe whence it came, flows into the brake cylinder forcing out the brake piston and applying the brake.

. It is the difference in the air pressure on the sides of this triple valve piston that applies the brake, and this differential is obtained by reducing the pressure in the brake pipe below that in the reservoir. The reduction may be made gradually to make what is termed a service application, or it may be rapidly reduced to produce a quick application of the brake. Therefore if the hose or pipe connections are ruptured by the parting of the train the application of the brake is the natural consequence.

(2) A split switch consists of two point or switch-rails and these are straight or curved to fit the curve of the turnout and planed tapering to a vertical edge, so that the ends will fit close against the main or stock rails. The heels of the switch-rails are toward the diverging tracks, which is the reverse position from that of the stub-switch rails. The two outer rails of these tracks are continuous, the outer rail of the main track continuing unbroken, while the inner rail follows the curve of the turnout.

The switch-rails are between these stock rails with a space of about 5 to 6½ inches between the gage lines at the heel, or a clearance of 2½ to 3½ inches between the rail heads. The throw of the point-ends is from 3½ to 5½ inches, so that when one switch-rail is home against its stock rail the other is from 3½ to 5½ inches from the other stock rail. About 12 to 16 inches ahead of the point the stock-rail on the turnout side is given a kink or bend by means of a rail-bender, so that when set for the main line the gage sides of the stock and the switch-rails will be in exact alinement.

E. E. F., Indianapolis, Indiana.—On September 9 the Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Western Railroad, a subsidiary of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton system, and owning that part of the system west of Hamilton, Ohio, aggregating 361 miles of line, was sold at fore-

closure to a joint reorganization committee representing the bondholders of the company at the upset price of the two mortgages held against the road. The one bid was for $3,500,000, this amount representing a mortgage held by the Equitable Trust Company of $2,100,000 and a mortgage of $1,400,000 held by the Central Trust Company.

The larger mortgage pertained to the eastern half of the road, operated between Hamilton, Ohio, and Indianapolis, Indiana, while the smaller mortgage was held against the part operated between Indianapolis and Springfield, Illinois. The sale must be confirmed by the United States Court at Cincinnati, Ohio.

It is reported that William A. Read & Company, of New York, obtained the support of a large proportion of the bondholders in a plan of reorganization which involves replacing the present bond issues with stock and raising new capital. The plan contemplates the operation of road independent of the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton. Mr. B. A. Worthington, formerly receiver of the Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Western, has been appointed vice-president and general manager with offices at Indianapolis, Indiana.

T. N. P., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.—We are unable to give you a description of the Bark Camp Railroad, Clearfield County, Pennsylvania (abandoned), or the Crystal Bay Railroad, Washoe County, Nevada, abandoned in 1891-1892. Perhaps some of our readers can supply this information.

D. B. P., Boulder, Colorado.—On the Intercolonial Railway of Canada there are approximately 409 locomotives in service. It is hardly within the scope of this department to give you all the information you desire, in regard to these engines. In the classification of them this company uses the symbols B for the switchers, 0-6-0 class; E for the Pacific types 4-6-2, H for the Consolidation or 2-8-0, D for the 8-wheel engines, 4-4-0 class, F for moguls or 2-6-0, and G for 10-wheel-passenger locomotives of the 4-6-0 type.

The affix numbers 1, 2, 3, *et cetera*, indicate the builders, and the affix letters A, B, C, *et cetera*, indicate the different lots with slight changes made by each of the builders. Thus take the Pacific type engines as an example. Here the class letter E with the affix figure 1 indicates that this particular engine was built by the Kingston Locomotive Works while the affix figure 2 would indicate that it was built by the Montreal Locomotive Works.

In regard to the affix letters A, B, C, *et cetera*, which indicates a different lot or slight changes made by the builders: Thus E-1-A indicates Pacific type, built by Kingston, weight of this engine 196,000 pounds, while E-1-B would indicate the same type, same builder, but this engine weighs 204,600 pounds the affix letter B indicating the difference in the weight of these engines.

We understand that on this road they are about to change the system of locomotive classification. The class B which indicates the 0-6-0 switchers is to be changed to S, the class E or Pacifics is to be changed to P, *et cetera*, using the initial of the class of engine instead of an arbitrary letter.

IF a 20-pound brake application is made it gives 50 pounds in the brake cylinders. Now does this mean 25 pounds in each cylinder on the locomotives, and if so, how is the additional 5 pounds obtained?

(2) Does a 20-pound application give 50 pounds brake-cylinder pressure on a car, and if so how is it obtained with a 20-pound application?—A. R., Louisville, Kentucky.

The 20-pound application you refer to means a reduction of 20 pounds in the brake-pipe or what was formerly known as the train-line pipe. The air pressure that enters the brake-cylinders is from the auxiliary reservoir. The reduction made by the brake-valve merely operates the triple valves, and when the triple valve moves to application position it admits air from the auxiliary reservoir to the brake cylinders.

You should understand that on one side of the triple valve piston there is auxiliary reservoir pressure and on the other side brake-pipe pressure and that this triple-valve piston is operated by increasing the brake-pipe to release brakes and reducing the brake-pipe pressure in order to apply them. Normally these pressures are balanced and if the brake-pipe pressure is reduced five pounds, the triple valve will be moved by the differential of pressure and allow five pounds from the auxiliary reservoir to flow to the brake cylinders. The pressure in the brake cylinders that will be developed as a result depends upon the size of the chamber the reservoir pressure expands into; that is, the length of the brake-cylinder piston-travel.

The sizes of the auxiliary reservoirs used are such that they will equalize with two brake-cylinders at about 4 inches travel each, at 50 pounds pressure per square inch from 70 pounds pressure in the auxiliary reservoir. A longer travel would mean less pressure and a shorter travel would develop a higher brake-cylinder pressure.

You should also understand that under 70 pounds pressure a 20 pound brake-pipe reduction will not result in more than 50 pounds pressure in the brake cylinders as the auxiliary reservoir and brake cylinder pressures have then equalized, and no higher cylinder pressure can be obtained even if the reduction is continued to 40 or 50 pounds.

The E. T. locomotive brake operates upon the same principle. The pressure chamber and application chamber of the distributing-valve are so proportioned that a 20-pound drop in the pressure chamber builds up 50 pounds pressure

in the smaller application chamber, and the application portion admits a like amount from the main reservoir to the brake-cylinders.

(2) The auxiliary reservoirs used on cars are so proportioned to the sizes of the brake cylinders in use that a 20-pound reduction in the brake-pipe and a consequent drop of 20 pounds in the reservoir results in a 50-pound pressure in the brake-cylinder if the piston does not travel over 7½ or 8 inches.

G. D., El Paso, Texas.—The heaviest and most powerful locomotive in the world is the Erie Triplex Compound, built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1914. The engine was fully described in the "Light of the Lantern" in the July, 1914, issue of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE.

L. D., Fall River, Massachusetts.—The Canadian Government Railways include the Intercolonial Railway, International Railway of New Brunswick, National Transcontinental Railway, Prince Edward Island Railway, and the St. John and Quebec Railway.

WHAT is the difference between priming and foaming of a boiler?—J. B. C., Richmond, Virginia.

Priming and foaming both mean that water is being carried by the steam from the boiler to the cylinders, a dangerous condition. Priming generally results from the water level in the boiler being carried too high, or through forcing the engine to its full power; foaming is caused by impurities, such as grease, soap, or alkali, causing an aggregation of suds or bubbles that mix with the steam. Boilers that need washing out generally cause priming and foaming.

GIVE the various indications of hand, flag, lamp, audible, and whistle signals.—K. G., Austin, Illinois.

HAND, FLAG, AND LAMP SIGNALS.

Manner of Using.	Indication.
Swung across the track	Stop
Raised and lowered vertically	Proceed
Swung vertically in a circle at half-arm's length across the track, when the train is standing	Back
Swung vertically in a circle at arm's length across the track, when the train is running	Train has parted
Swung horizontally above the head, when the train is standing	Apply air-brakes
Held at arm's length above the head, when the train is standing.	Release air-brakes

Any object waved violently by any one on or near the track is a signal to stop.

A fusee on or near the track burning red must not be passed until burned out. When burning green it is a caution signal.

The explosion of one torpedo is a signal to stop; the explosion of two not more than 200 feet apart is a signal to reduce speed and look out for a stop signal.

WHISTLE SIGNALS.

The signals prescribed are illustrated by "O" for short sounds, "—" for longer sounds. The sound of the whistle should be distinct, with intensity and duration proportionate to the distance the signal is to be conveyed.

Sound.	Indication.
(a) o	Stop. Apply brakes.
(b) — —	Release brakes.
(c) — o o o . .	Flagman go back and protect rear of train.
(d) — — — — .	Flagman return from west or south.
(e) — — — — —	Flagman return from East or north.
(f) — — — . . .	When running, signal that train parted.
(g) o o	Answer for any signal not otherwise provided for.
(h) o o o	When train is standing, back. Answer to signal to back.
(j) o o o o	Call for signals.
(k) — o o	To call attention of trains of the same or inferior class to signals displayed for a following section.
(l) — — o o . . .	Approaching public crossings at grade.
(m) ————————	Approaching stations.

A succession of short sounds of the whistle is an alarm for persons or cattle on the track, and calls attention of the trainmen of the danger ahead.

SOME few years ago I remember reading an article in the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE, where a person made a statement that when the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railway made the race for the mail for the West, that he rode in the cab of engine No. 1512, if I remember correctly, on the Burlington on this mail test-train. He stated that on the stretch from Mendota to Galesburg they ran at the rate of 127 miles per hour.

Would you kindly give us in your columns a sketch of this run? Did this train run all the way from Mendota to Galesburg at a rate of 127 miles per hour or did this speed-indicator just register 127 miles in places?—J. M. C., Louisville, Kentucky.

The story, "Racing for a Mail Contract," by John Walters, appeared in the November, 1914, issue of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE. This story was descriptive of the race between the Burlington and Northwestern systems for the United States mail contract. The Burlington engines were the No. 590 between Chicago and Burlington, Iowa, the No. 1103 between Burlington and Creston,

Iowa, and the No. 1612 between Creston and Omaha, Nebraska.

No mention was made of any such speed as 127 miles per hour. Near Galesburg, Illinois, the train is said to have attained a speed of 110 miles per hour for two and a half miles, but that must surely have been the limit. The run between Chicago and Burlington, 205 miles, was made in 237 minutes. A train running at the rate of 127 miles per hour would cover 80 miles in 38 minutes.

IS there any book in existence like a railroad dictionary; that is, one explaining the different terms used in the railroad world?—I. R. O., Audubon, Minnesota.

We know of no general book such as you desire. Would suggest that you communicate with the McGraw-Hill Book Company, 239 West Thirty-Ninth Street, New York. This concern publishes a signal dictionary, car-builders' dictionary, and a locomotive dictionary.

WHAT kind of paint is used on the boiler-jacket of Western Maryland engine No. 1004? It is a kind of stone color and does not easily tarnish or change color.—H. E. R., Elkins, West Virginia.

The paint that you refer to is known as Russia Jacket Enamel and is furnished by the Sherwin-Williams Company, Cleveland, Ohio.

W. W. C., Chicago, Illinois.—The superintendent of telegraph on the Boston and Maine Railroad is Mr. S. A. D. Forristall, with offices at Boston, Massachusetts.

T. T. T., Montclair, New Jersey.—We know of no book or publication that contains the individual methods of locomotive classification of the various railroads, nor could we tell you how you might readily obtain them. Nearly all roads have their own system of locomotive classification, and as there are over 1,100 steam roads in North America, in order to obtain all the data that you desire it would be necessary to have the cooperation of the mechanical department of each road.

A. P., Amador City, California.—The term horse-power is the unit by which the work performed by engines and machinery is usually measured. It was first adopted by Watt, to whom it was suggested by the fact that his engineers had frequently to replace the labor of horses in pumping. The sustained work a horse can perform in labor of this kind is at the rate of about 22,000 foot-pounds per minute, but he allowed fifty per cent more than this and took 33,000 foot-pounds of work per minute as his measure of the work of a horse, and this unit has since been retained.

The idea of power involves the element of time. For example: 33,000 foot-pounds' work may be performed in a minute, an hour, or any time, and it is still 33,000 foot-pounds. Power is rate of work. The horse-power involves the performance of 33,000 foot-pounds every minute.

Although the term horse-power is not generally used with much significance in connection with the work done by locomotives, yet there are many times when it is very interesting to make comparisons between locomotives in this way. Horse-power is represented by the raising of 33,000 pounds through a space of one foot in a minute. Careful experiments have shown that if we represent the velocity of a locomotive in miles per hour by V and the tractive force by T, the horse-power is equal to the velocity multiplied by the tractive force and divided by 375. Thus if the tractive force of a locomotive is 49,800 pounds and the velocity 25 miles per hour, the horse-power will be 3,320.

WHERE can I secure a list of the officials of the Lehigh Valley Railroad?

(2) What is the weight on drivers of the class M-17 and also the G-10 locomotives of the Lehigh Valley Railroad?—W. M. H., Cortland, New York.

The Railway Periodicals Company, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, publish "The Monthly Official Railway List." The price of single copies is fifty cents. A quarterly list is also issued by the Railway Equipment and Publications Company, 75 Church Street, New York, the price of which is one dollar per copy. Both of the above publications contain a list of the officials of all the steam roads throughout North America.

(2) The weight on drivers of the class M-17 locomotives of the Lehigh averages 114,625 pounds, while the class G-10 averages 98,200 pounds.

D. F., Jackson, Michigan.—One of the principal advantages of superheating or increasing the temperature of steam is that the volume of a given weight of steam is increased and all losses due to cylinder condensation are eliminated, which results in reduced steam consumption, increased boiler capacity, and saving in coal and water.

W. G. B., Austin, Texas.—See our answer to A. S. H. in this issue. It will no doubt give you all the information you desire.

B. H., New York, New York.—Twenty-one years is the usual minimum age at which a railroad company will consider an applicant for the position of locomotive fireman. However, with your previous experience and the consent of your parents or guardians you may receive consideration. In addition to the educational requirements it should be remembered that

one of the principal regulations is the physical robust health of the applicant. Application forms which give full particulars are usually to be had at the offices of the division master mechanic or superintendent.

W. M. H., Cortland, New York.—The San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad operates 1,100 miles, 169 locomotives, 122 passenger-cars, and 3,366 freight and miscellaneous cars.

(2) There are no Mallet compound locomotives in operation on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad.

A. R. S., North Spencer, New York.—The first of the forty-two electric locomotives now in the course of construction for use on the electrification of the western lines of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway was delivered to the road on September 25.

The actual weights of the completed freight unit are as follows:

Total	364,000 pounds
Weight on drivers.....	448,000 pounds
Weight per driving-axle	56,000 pounds
Weight per guiding-axle	20,000 pounds

Twelve of the locomotives on order are geared for passenger service and the remaining thirty are geared for freight service. Both freight and passenger types are equipped for regenerative braking, this apparatus being under control of the engineer. All of the passenger locomotives and several of the freight locomotives will be equipped with oil-fired steam boilers for heating the passenger-trains.

Each of the motor-generator sets consists of a 60-cycle, 3-phase, 2,300-volt synchronous motor direct connected to two 1,500-volts direct-current generators. The generators are connected permanently in series to supply 3,000 volts to the trolley. Each set is also provided with an exciter at each end, one providing excitation for the revolving field of the motor, and the other supplying the separately excited fields of the d-c machines.

These sets are in general similar to the five 1,000-kw., 2,400-volt units in operation on the Butte, Anaconda and Pacific Railway except as regards voltage and capacity.

The direct-current generators are equipped with commutating-poles and compensated pole-face windings to insure sparkless commutation under heavy overloads. This overload capacity is 150 per cent normal load for two hours, and 300 per cent normal load for periods of five minutes. This will provide ample margin for starting a train of maximum tonnage on the most difficult grades.

The transformers are an example of the most recent design and construction. There is a total of thirty-two of these units, which are to be used for stepping down the power supply from 100,000-volt transmission line to 2,300 volts as required for the synchronous motor-generator sets. These transformers will be installed in fourteen substations, which will furnish power for the entire electrification from Harlowton, Montana, to Avery, Idaho.

These transformers are all of the 3-phase core type with a ratio of voltages of 102,000 to 2,300. For regulating purposes taps are provided for 97,200 volts and 94,200 volts. Taps are also brought out on the secondary windings to give 1,150 volts, or half voltage for starting the motor-generator sets.

C. C. H., Lowell, Massachusetts.—The supervisor of apprentices on the various roads which you mention are as follows: Erie Railroad, Mr. W. S. Cozad, Meadville, Pennsylvania; New York Central, Mr. W. D. Arter, New York; Pennsylvania Railroad, J. W. Hale, Altoona, Pennsylvania.

W. F. D., Hamlet, North Carolina.—The following works of Cy Warman are published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: "The Express Messenger and Other Stories of the Rail," "Frontier Stories," "The Last Spike and Other Railroad Stories," "Short Rails," "Tales of an Engineer with Rhymes of the Rail," "The White Mail."

The following are published by D. Appleton & Co., New York: "The Story of the Railroad," "Snow on the Head-Light."

The Rand-Avery Company, Boston, Massachusetts, publish "The Songs of Cy Warman."

A. W. B., Richmond, Virginia.—You probably refer to the bulletins issued from time to time by the American Locomotive Company, 30 Church Street, New York. The Baldwin Locomotive Works, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, also issue similar booklets. These, however, are not prepared for general distribution and we cannot say positively that they can be obtained on application to the companies.

(2) The hinged or adjustable cap on the smoke-stack of the Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific Railway locomotives to which you refer, is no doubt a smoke-stack hood or smoke deflector. It consists of a movable elbow attached to the top of the stack and can be thrown down clear when running in the open or raised to deflect the smoke or cinders back over the engine when running through tunnels.

Locomotive operating where there are snow-sheds or other wooden structures are fitted with this device to prevent the shocks to these structures incident to the exhaust of the engine. You do not state just what engine you saw equipped with this device and hence we cannot say positively the class of service performed by the locomotive. We recall that engine No. 807 of the above road was equipped with the smoke-deflector. This locomotive, which is of the Pacific type, was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1911 for heavy passenger service.

(3) The cylindrical tank mounted on a tender instead of the more common U-shaped and water-bottom tanks is known as the Vanderbilt Tender Tank.

R. C. H., San Francisco, California.—See answer to B. H., New York, in this issue.

M. J. V., Solon, Ohio.—The eight-wheel switchers, 0-8-0 type, of the New York Central lines in use at Collingwood, Toledo, and Chicago exert a tractive force of 49,500 pounds; total weight of the engine, 239,500 pounds; diameter of drivers, 58 inches; cylinders, 25x30 inches; boiler pressure, 180 pounds.

(2) Do not quite understand your other quesion in regard to the triplex compound of the Erie Railroad. If you will again refer to the article by Mr. A. W. Munkittrick in the August, 1914, issue you will note in one of the closing paragraphs that while the locomotive had not been delivered to the Erie road at that time it was completed and being tested by the builders.

A. S. H., Holyoke, Massachusetts.—On nearly all of the larger roads where the system of apprentice instruction is in vogue with slight variations the regulations governing the employment of apprentices are about the same. A regular apprentice—that is, one who has not had previous shop experience or is not a graduate of a technical institution—must be at least sixteen years of age for the machinist trade and eighteen years for boilermakers' and blacksmiths'.

The applicant must have a good common-school education, being able to read and write and fill out an application blank, and to make ordinary computation in arithmetic, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of four or more figures, and must also have some knowledge of the simpler forms of common fractions. The apprenticeship term is generally four years of 300 full working days, the same hours as are worked by the shop to constitute a day, and lost time on account of absence from work must be made up before advancement.

Apprentices failing to show an aptitude for their trade will be dismissed from service. On many roads employment is on approbation, and if at the end of a specified period the young man does not develop a capacity to learn the different classes of work in the department in which he is employed he is dismissed.

Before the apprenticeship begins the parents or guardians of a candidate are required to sign "minor's release" or regular form of apprenticeship agreement covering the entire term.

The pay of apprentices is usually about $1 per day for the first year, $1.25 for the second year, $1.50 for the third year, $2 for the fourth year, after which he receives the usual wage of a journeyman.

The company generally provides a practical instructor in the shops and a technical instructor in the school. About four hours each week is spent in the school, during which time instruction is given in mathematics, mechanical drawing, electricity, machine-shop practise, *et cetera*.

Machinist apprentices serve about two years in the erecting-shop and receive instruction in setting frames and cylinders, fitting up guides, steam-chests, and valves and valve motion, shoes, wedges, and boiler attachments, setting valves, adjusting connecting-rods, *et cetera*. Then two years are spent in the general machine shop with instruction in drilling, tapping, turning, boring, planing and shaper work, bench work and vise work, fitting and filling brasswork and air-brake mechanism.

Blacksmiths' apprentices serve a short time in the erecting-shop learning the different parts of the locomotive, and the rest of the first two years is spent at general work and hammer work, and the last two years general blacksmithing.

Boilermakers' apprentices serve about eighteen months heating rivets, helping, and on light steel work. The rest of the term is on general boiler work.

(2) The principal shop-school on the Pennsylvania Railroad is at Altoona, Pennsylvania, but similar schools are maintained at the Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and Wilmington shops. The system is in use on the Boston and Maine Railroad. Applications should be made to the master mechanic, general foreman, or to the supervisor of apprentices.

WHY cannot a locomotive climb hills? It seems to have trouble in going up even small grades. What is the steepest grade that a locomotive can climb?

(2) What is meant by "Muzzle energy"? When a gun is stated to have muzzle energy of 88,000 foot-tons, what does this mean?—W. G. C., San Francisco, California.

Locomotives are climbing Pike's Peak and Mount Washington every day during the busy season. There is no limit short of ninety degrees that a locomotive may not be made to climb. It is a mere matter of mechanical construction and financial results. In the absence of rack-rails the law of gravitation limits the climbing-quality according to the adhesive quality of the locomotive and the amount of load to be hauled.

When a train is hauled up a grade the resistance due to friction is increased by that due to lifting the train against gravity. The amount of this increased resistance is determined as follows:

One mile equals 5,280 feet, and if the grade be one foot per mile, the pull necessary to lift a ton of 2,000 pounds will be $2{,}000 \div 5{,}280 = .3788$ pounds. Therefore to find the total resistance due to a grade in pounds per ton of 2,000 pounds the rise in feet per mile must be multiplied by .3788. If the grade is expressed in feet per hundred or per cent, the resistance in pounds per ton

of 2,000 pounds will be 2,000 ÷ 100 = 20 pounds for each per cent of grade.

Calculated in feet, assuming a resistance of .3788 pounds per ton for a straight grade of one foot per mile, and if the tractive power of the locomotive is known it may be readily calculated up what amount of grade the locomotive will haul a load of a certain weight. At 100 feet per mile there will be an added resistance of nearly 38 pounds per ton. At 200 feet per mile, nearly 76 pounds per ton, and so on. To the resistance so obtained must be added that due to speed and internal friction in order to find the total resistance in pounds per ton.

(2) The muzzle energy referred to means that the energy of the shell as it leaves the muzzle of the gun is equal to the energy which would be sufficient to lift 88,000 tons one foot in one minute.

A. T. P., Chicago, Illinois.—We could not venture an opinion in regard to the merits of a device such as you describe unless we had some further particulars in regard to it. If you have secured a patent send us the number of it, or you might submit the same for consideration to some of the reputable manufacturers of switches and crossovers, such as the St. Louis Frog and Switch Company, St. Louis, Missouri; Indianapolis Switch and Frog Company, Springfield, Ohio; McMyler Interstate Company, Cleveland, Ohio; Pettibone-Mulliken Co., Chicago, Illinois; Weir Frog Company, Cincinnati, Ohio; Buda Company, Chicago, Illinois; Elliott Frog and Switch Company, East St. Louis, Illinois.

P. F. K., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.—You should make application at the office of the master mechanic or superintendent of the nearest division point. Personal application is generally best. See our answer to B. H., New York, in this issue.

J. F., McAdam Junction, N. B.—When completed the 5½-mile tunnel on the Canadian Pacific Railway through the Selkirk Mountains will be the longest in the western hemisphere. This tunnel will shorten the main line by six miles, reduce the peak of the grade 513 feet, and do away with all but six miles of 2.2 per cent grade, and eliminate about 5½ miles of snow-sheds. Trains running through the tunnel will be operated by electricity.

AS TO THE MOTHER HUBBARD ENGINE.

AT the last meeting of the stove-pipe committee, the question was asked "Why the Mother Hubbard engine?" says "FIVE MINUTES LATE" in Buffalo *Evening News*. One old-timer said the idea originated on a road he used to work on in Pennsylvania where the road was so crooked the engineer could see nothing on left-hand curves, depending on his fireman to holler how things were on his side. This plan is still carried out, and generally works all right.

But something happened. As every railroad man knows there are curmudgeons on locomotives as well as in other occupations. This engineer was stuck on himself; he and the fireman did not "speak as they passed by." He thought himself superior to the poor stoker.

But one day something happened, and all hands were called on the carpet. The astute superintendent soon found out how the accident happened, and said he would avoid a repetition of this incompatibility of temper. After consulting with the M. M. they fixed up the engine with separate cabs, one for the fireman on the foot plate, and one on top of the boiler for the engineer.

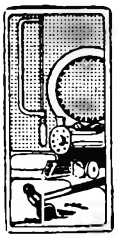
So the fireman would have nothing to do but keep up the steam, and the engineer, having an unobstructed view, would have nothing to do but run the engine.

But this superintendent and master mechanic never thought of the old adage, "two heads are better than one," even if one is made of ivory, and again something happened. Two men on an engine must be agreeable. Sleep is an insidious thing, and many a time the engineer is glad to say to his fireman:

"Say, Bill, get up on my side and let me take that scoop shovel a few miles and knock this sleep out of my eyes."

Another old-timer said he commenced railroading on the same road, and it was so full of curves, that the glare from the fire-box blinded the engineer, and very often the fireman going round a curve and aiming a shovel of coal at the firebox would throw it all over the engineer, and on particularly sharp bends in the road the fireman frequently broke the glass in the headlight, thinking it was the firebox. The engineers reported this, and that was the reason the engineer's cab was placed on top of the boiler, out of the way of the fireman, so that the engineer would not have his boiled shirt and cuffs spoiled by the fireman throwing coal all over him.

Another old-timer said that on a railroad he worked on they had an engineer who used to work his engine with the minimum of water, so he would have lots of steam all the while and be able to make long runs, thereby cutting out some of the water stops, but he got caught at last, and although there was no explosion the crown-sheet was badly scorched. He was too good a man to let out, so the company gave him a Mother Hubbard engine to run, and after that he had the water bubbling out of the smoke-stack half the time.



What the INVENTORS Are Doing

BY LESTER L. SARGENT.

WE print with each invention described the number of its patent papers. Readers wishing to secure more minute details and drawings of these patents can order from the Bureau of Patents, Washington, D. C., by giving the number. The government charges five cents each for patent papers. Remember that stamps or other forms of currency are NOT *taken. A five-cent coin must accompany each single order. —THE EDITOR.*

IN the northern portions of the country where winter brings new problems for the engineer an improved solution for them is disclosed in a Snow-Plow, No. 1,155,099, invented by Andrew Ryan, Knob, California. The plow body is V-shaped, with concave sides. The cowcatcher is removed to permit of its attachment. Pipes lead from the smoke-stack into the chambers of the plow, and hot and waste gases are utilized to heat the plow, increasing its effectiveness in removing snow.

A NEW wireless receiving improvement, No. 1,156,625, in receiving installation for wireless telegraphy and wireless telephony has just been patented by G. W. Pickard, Amesbury, Massachusetts. Its principal object is to increase the dependability of the receiving instrument by amplifying the currents—three amplifiers being suggested by the inventor as about the right number. The next step after sufficient amplification is to change the character of the amplified, rectified currents from the pulsatory form to direct makes and breaks. This is done by cutting in a vibrating-contact relay of the construction standard in telegraphic or signaling work. In the amplifier, a microphone, a regulating magnet having its coil in circuit with the microphone, and an adjustable magnet in the vicinity of the regulating magnet for varying the field of the latter, are combined.

A POLING device has been invented by Russell Arthur, Erwin, West Virginia. The Arthur Poling Device for railroad cars, No. 1,157,492, is used on switching engines in railroad yards to "pole" or move cars on a side track alongside the track upon which the engine is traveling. The pole is mounted for horizontal and pivotal movement, and it may also be moved vertically. It is carried on the tender of a locomotive. The pole is attached to a gear, which is rotated by a rack-bar. This rack-bar is also a piston-rod, with a piston on its other end within a cylinder, into and out of which compressed air is admitted to operate the pole. Valves provided in connection with the device make it possible for a person standing upon the platform of the tender of the engine to operate the device without incurring any personal danger.

HARRY C. STICKEL, Star Junction, Pennsylvania, has invented a Journal-Box for railway cars, No. 1,157,446, that is locked to the truck-frame in a manner permitting removal of the wheels or replacing brasses without the use of any tools except a lifting-jack. This journal structure is provided with a bearing-brass and with a wedge for holding the brass in place. A key locks the wedge in place and the wedge in turn locks the brass in place.

The parts retain their proper positions without the presence of bolts or other similar fastening devices. "In order to remove the wheels or replace the brasses," the inventor explains, "it is only necessary to lift the truck by means of a suitable jack, whereupon the box is lifted sufficiently so that the wedge can be removed and then the brass and the key may be removed in order. After this the box is in condition for ready removal from the journal end of the axle."

TELESCOPIC construction of a new Locomotive Torch, No. 1,156,097, invented by Ashby S. Rece, Huntington, West Virginia, makes it possible to economize space when the torch is not in use and further makes it possible to seal the torch with a tight-fitting cap when the wick-tube is telescoped into the body or oil receptacle.

MILLION-DOLLAR train robberies can be eliminated from a place among occasional news items if the "Safety Car" invented by Thomas G. Smith, New Orleans, Louisiana, were adopted, according to the confident belief of

the inventor. This car, No. 1,089,506, has an upper and lower compartment, money and valuable packages being kept in the upper half of the car under guard of an armed messenger who is in position to hold off robbers entering the lower half of the car. Mr. Smith has compiled a list of train-robberies that indicates such occurrences are not so rare as the public has imagined.

A TENDER Coal-Loading Apparatus, No. 1,157,366, invented by Henry C. Buchwald, Baltimore, Maryland, has a tower equipped with a motor for raising coal-dumping car or huge shovel from a pit into which the coal is shoveled to a height where the coal can readily be dumped into the tender.

THOMAS STEWART, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has devised a Locomotive Tender, No. 1,157,455, with parallel partitions dividing the water-tank into a number of horizontal superimposed water compartments. This lessens the likelihood of accident through such a shifting of weight of water in the tank as might under certain conditions make possible the overturning of the tender and locomotive and consequent wreck of the train.

ALBERT C. KELLY, Gradyville, Georgia, has recently patented a Valve Connection, No. 1,151,017, for locomotives by which a disabled steam-chest or cylinder may be quickly cut out of operation and the locomotive worked from the opposite chest or cylinder, without any loss of time.

"The steam-pipes leading to the valve-chests," says the inventor, "are each provided with a gate-valve that is accessible from the outside of a locomotive so that either or both may be opened or closed at will, thus cutting out of operation a disabled steam-chest without interfering with the operation of the other cylinder, or lubrication to either side of the engine.

"This appliance is applicable to either saturated or superheater locomotives, and enough time is saved in one operation to pay for installation. In case of leaky throttles, packing can be replaced around piston-rod or valve-stem with full head of steam by using this valve."

CHARLES W. SULLIVAN, Los Angeles, California, has recently patented an intricate Safety Attachment for boilers, No. 1,157,058. In fact, it incorporates several devices for preventing accidents due to water getting too low in the boiler or due to the introduction of water into the boiler when the level of water is so low that the sudden admission of more water might cause an explosion.

An audible warning by an automatic whistle is given when the level of water in the boiler falls below a predetermined height. Other mechanism automatically closes the oil-fuel supply to the boiler furnace under such conditions. A fusible plug mounted on the crown-sheet is adapted to establish communication between the interior of the boiler and the interior of a pipe leading from the boiler to the exterior of the boiler, the water-feeding apparatus being rendered inoperative when the fusible plug is melted.

The melting of the fusible plug which comprises a tubular casing also causes the blowing of the warning whistle. Further, the operation of one of the safety valves of the apparatus will reduce air-pressure in the train line and set the brakes.

How the invention may save a wreck is set forth by the inventor in the following interesting statement:

"It may occur that on the locomotive going down a steep grade the water in the boiler will shift its level so that the water will flow toward the front end of the boiler and the crown-sheet in the rear will be uncovered. The safety device will become operative on the melting of the fusible plug. Should now the engineer and the fireman in charge of the locomotive, fearing an instant explosion of the boiler, desert the locomotive and leave the train to its fate, a wreck would be liable to occur, especially in view of the fact that the train is going down a steep grade which is usually found in connection with heavy curves, if it were not for the automatic application of the air-brake. . . .

"It is obvious that the apparatus may be used also where coal is used instead of oil. Where coal is used a pipe is made to extend to the opening into the fire-box. In case of the pipe becoming filled with steam from the boiler, on the melting of the fusible plug the steam from the pipe will extinguish the fire in the furnace."

WILLIAM M. PERKINS, North Manchester, Indiana, has devised a "safety" cement Railroad Tie, No. 1,156,095, which takes account of the requirement for a certain amount of resiliency in ties. His tie is made up of two half-ties or sections formed by looped metallic bands which encircle a body of concrete and which are reenforced by vertically extending bolts, preferably extending through vertical metallic sleeves.

A certain relative pivotal movement of the two halves or sections of the tie is allowed for by the provision of connecting plates bolted to the adjacent ends of each section in such manner as to allow of a degree of vertical movement under pressure of a passing load while rigidly keying the tie against longitudinal strain.

THOMAS M. FREEBLE, Rochester, Pennsylvania, has invented a Manual Actuator for railway signals, No. 1,155,477, for emergency use in instances where a landslide or other track obstruction has occurred in a block section

of a railway signaling-system, which is of such a nature that it will not set the signal or signals guarding the entrance to that block at danger. In such cases the new device is applied to the track-rails to throw the proper signals to danger positions at any point in the block, and without the necessity for sending a signalman back along the track to flag an approaching train.

In its simplest form the invention consists of a bar of conducting material adapted to be engaged with the heads of the track-rails and secured to the rails by set screws. The screws form a means of closely binding the hooked end portions of the bar in a good electrical contact with the heads of the rails so that as soon as properly applied it will at once effect a short circuit. One of the members hooking over the rail is provided with a current indicator which will indicate the fact that a short circuit has been established.

DANIEL A. PENEDO, Bisbee, Arizona, has invented a Digging Machine, No. 1,154,545, which is mounted on a railroad truck and which may be swung at any angle relative to the truck for excavating purposes, loading of coal, or the like. The loading or digging is performed by an inclined endless conveyer having a series of buckets spaced apart on the belt to which they are attached.

AN Electric Locomotive, No. 1,155,225, invented by George M. Eaton, Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, has recently been patented to the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company. Distinctive features of this locomotive are a centrally located cross-tie or bolster depending from the locomotive cab between the adjacent bumpers of the trucks; a link connection between the two trucks which may extend through the central cross-tie; electric driving motors centrally located with respect to the trucks on which they are mounted, and means for restraining each truck in its central lateral plane.

The necessity for the usual truck center and king-pin structure is avoided. By locating a heavy cross-tie at the center of the cab the inventor is enabled to locate the driving motors centrally of the truck where they are more accessible, increasing the usefulness of the locomotive for high-speed service.

ELECTRIC Automatic Train-Stopping Mechanism and Automatic Means for Limiting the Speed of Trains are the subject of two recent patents, Nos. 1,155,476 and 1,155,478, issued to Thomas M. Freeble, Rochester, Pennsylvania. The apparatus is for use on railroads employing block-signaling systems. An interesting feature of the mechanism is a dial and pointer in the engine cab from which the engineer can tell just how fast he can run without being subject to an automatic stop. The indicator arm is operatively connected by rods and gears with a gear carried by one of the axles of the locomotive.

A GRAIN-CAR Door, No. 1,157,124, invented by Martin A. Ruble and Carl M. Stevens, Esmond, North Dakota, is made up of adjoining bars flexibly connected so that it operates after the manner of a roll-top desk, except that it rolls down under the car floor instead of rolling up. Protecting strips or ribs at the juncture of the bars forming the door insure against any leakage of grain.

THE HEADQUARTERS PHILOSOPHER SAYS:

IT is strange in life that we recognize the right of every criminal, no matter how clear his guilt, to have a fair trial and to speak in his own defense, yet we condemn those who are near to us, every day, misjudge and sentence them without a moment's listening to reasons, causes, or motives.

FROM THE RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE.

The Sunny Side of the Track

"HEAH, conductor!" yelled the passenger on the Southern train; "that was my station, suh! Why didn't yuh stop theah, suh?"

"We don't stop there no more," said the conductor. "The engineer's mad at the station agent."—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

ON the platform of a New York subway train was a middle-aged man. On a side seat was a girl in old rose, and with cheeks to match.

The man on the platform caught her eye for a moment, and threw a frantic kiss. The girl first smiled, then blushed furiously.

He threw another; she turned away a crimsoned face.

"That will about do for you," said the big raw-boned guard. "Go home to your wife."

This didn't seem to worry the apparently respectable man, and, catching a glint from the girl's eyes, he threw another kiss. She turned her face to study a hat across the car.

Finally the girl rose to leave the car. The man who was trying to flirt with her also faced the sliding door. By that time all eyes were on them. The guard was mad all through, and a couple of passengers edged dangerously close.

The girl in old rose took the arm of the man, and said in a silvery voice that all could hear:

"Oh, papa; how could you?"

THE tall, fidgety man hurriedly entered the depot and, addressing a bystander, asked:

"Do you think I can catch the flier for Chicago?"

The man addressed casually surveyed the other's long legs and, slowly removing the cigar from between his lips, replied:

"Well, it looks like you ought to, but you'd better hurry, for she's been gone half an hour."—*Judge.*

THERE was a man who fancied
That by driving good and fast
He'd get his car across the track
Before the train came past.
He'd miss the engine by an inch,
And make the train hands sore.
There *was* a man who fancied this:
There isn't any more.
—*New York American.*

THE baggagemaster halted the family party and politely explained that under the new law the value of the contents of each trunk must be given.

After a brief consultation with her daughter, mama pointed to her own trunk and said:

"Please put this one down as containing one thousand dollars' worth of personal belongings. This one," indicating her daughter's trunk, "you may put down for eight hundred."

"How about this little one?" asked the baggagemaster, resting his heel on its top.

"Oh, that!" replied the lady contemptuously. "Ten or twelve dollars will cover that one."

"I see," returned the official. "Father's going along, too."—*The Railway Conductor.*

PAT was employed on an engineering job a few miles out of the city, and was carried to his work by an express train, which accommodatingly slowed up near the scene of his labors. One morning, however, the train rushed the cut without reducing speed, and the superintendent of the job looked in vain for Pat. At last he saw a badly battered workman limping back down the ties and called to him:

"Hello, Pat! Where did you get off?"

Pat turned stiffly, and waving his hand toward the steep embankment, sighed:

"Oh—all along here."—*Life.*

A CONDUCTOR and a brakeman on a Montana railroad differ as to the proper pronunciation of the name Eurelia. Passengers are often startled at this station to hear the conductor yell:

"You're a liar! You're a liar!"

And then from the brakeman at the other end of the car:

"You really are! You really are!"—*Boston Globe.*

A WEARY traveler who had alighted for the night at a Western stopping-place was much pleased to hear the landlady say:

"Henry, there are no freighters to get off in the morning, so we can sleep late."

"Yes," agreed Henry; "we needn't have breakfast until half-past four."—*Lippincott's.*

CY WARMAN, the railroad poet, who died a few months ago in Chicago, was in the confidence of the Grand Trunk Railroad; but he was always modest about his post.

Once he stopped overnight at a little hotel in northern Michigan, conducted by a man who had previously run a shooting-gallery and later a night lunch-car in New York. The host related his own life story at length. Then he became interested in the biography of the visitor.

"What do you do up in Montreal, Mr. Warman?"

"I work for the Grand Trunk," said Warman. "What kind of a job have you got—do you sell tickets or handle baggage?"

"Oh, I've got a better job than either of those," said Cy. "You know the man who goes alongside of the train and taps the wheels with a hammer to see that everything's all right? Well, I help him listen."—*Everybody's.*

OBSERVATIONS OF A COUNTRY STATION-AGENT.

BY J. E. SMITH.

No. 92. — Random Recollections of a Boyhood Trip on the Railroad in the Days When Locomotives Were Fired with Cordwood.

THE writer of these random and irrelevant thoughts confesses that he has always possessed a rather keen curiosity to see and hear as much as possible of everything that came within his ken. By this, be informed, he does not pose as a wide and accurate observer, peering into all the nooks and corners with keen and sagacious penetration, and thereby storing up an ample reserve of prudence and knowledge; but rather, sorry be it, is he one of those oddities who marvel and wonder in wide-eyed and open-mouthed inquisitiveness, forgetting the first while the second rarity is chased

MOTHER BOUGHT SOME STICK CANDY FOR US WHILE WE WAITED.

Series began in the July, 1907, Railroad Man's Magazine.

across his vision by the third, and so on and so forth.

Some days ago I chanced to note in a recipe given by one of those happen-so centenarians, how to live fivescore or more, that the prime ingredient was to have a live curiosity. I feel I have many years ahead, barring sclerosis, cirrhosis, diabetes, apoplexy, paralysis, and a few score more of "osises" and "ysises" that lurk along the pathway of an old man's journey. I have the recommended quality.

I am one of those lunies who will run six squares to witness the conflagration of a wood-shed, and on my way back, if I see a sign, "Fresh Paint," I jab my finger against it to see, and it is. Oh, I'll live to be a thousand all right!

When I ride on a train I want to sit by the window to see everything that goes by. Some people never seem to care what goes by. I do. I have seen many a passenger stick his nose into a newspaper or glue his eyes on to the pages of a magazine, and miss a whole ten-mile procession of cedar fence-posts, all strung together with barbed wire and whizzing by so fast it hustled me to count 'em.

I took a trip a few days ago of one hundred and twenty miles on a branch road that runs two trains a day each way and one local freight. It crosses no rivers and goes through no cities and climbs no mountains. It trails off into the quiet and lonesome country.

Blackbirds and crows fly up from the corn-fields as the trains go by, and here and there a horse, sensing the motion, rears and gallops off across the meadow as we pass. Then there is the shepherd-dog, stirred by the spirit of noise and action, that races with us to the end of the field.

It was a four-hour's ride. My wife thought it would be tiresome, and that I should take something to read. She had in mind something inspiring and absorbing like Josephus's "Antiquities," Plutarch's "Biographies," or the volume of cheerful "Essays" by the late Rail Way Emerson; but I stood her off with the argument that there would be things to see and hear every minute, and that was enough for "yours curiously."

In some way this brought to my mind the memory of the first ride I ever had on a train. How many, I wonder, can remember that momentous event?

We lived in a country village ten miles inland from the nearest railroad. The journey by rail that we were to take was forty miles. We drove overland to the nearest depot, which I remember as being in combination and conspiracy with a country store.

In the middle West, in the early days of railroading, the local railway office was usually located in a country store. Red-topped boots, calico, plug tobacco, cove oysters, freight-bills, and railroad tickets all came over the same counter. Mother bought some stick candy for us while we waited.

After forty years in the toils of refinement some changes have been made in these conditions. The store and depot are divorced. The store is in a brick block with the Odd Fellows occupying the floor above. For these many years the owner has had nothing in common with the railroad. If anything, he is a little hostile, viewing the depot as an accomplice of the Chicago mail-order houses.

As for the agent at the depot, he now gives all his time to the railroad, but continues to sell sweets to his patrons. He does not have the antique shelves with the jars of lemon, wintergreen, and hoarhound stick candies, but has vending-machines, one outside, one inside, wherein the passenger deposits a penny and pushes a rod, while out slides a stick of peppermint or pepsin gum, a chocolate, or other confectionery titbit, all in neat parasite-proof wrappings.

The agent gets a profit on the sales. If business is brisk he may make as much as eighteen cents a month. These are net proceeds, understand, after all first costs have been deducted and remitted with the month's ticket sales.

It is not surprising, then, that when you look in on the agent's table you see, all mixed up with rate supplements and claim papers, rosy-tinted pamphlets about "valve-in-the-head motors," full-floating rears and quick detachables and the like. There is no limit to the fancies of a man who carries these side lines.

In my dull way I am trying to make the point that, while there has been a change in the partnership of the country store and the depot of forty years ago, the man at the depot is still selling candy and gum. All of which shows that passengers are exactly as they were a generation ago.

. I REMEMBER MOTHER ASSURING HIM THAT SHE HAD NEVER PAID ANYTHING FOR ME BEFORE.

There is only this difference: Now they wait on themselves, and instead of a stick of red, raw candy good for one full half-hour's sacchariferous revel and debauch, the dainty sanitary morsel is now mechanically delivered and goes in two bites.

I remember further on that eventful day of forty years ago that the man that waited on us weighed me. He stood me up on the counter scales and put on a weight or two until the whole outfit balanced, when he announced that it was fifty-eight pounds. Every one seemed pleased and surprised, and I had the secret conceit that I must be some whale to pull up all the iron that he piled on.

Now, getting back to the point once more: We still weigh them at the depot. Just outside the depot door stands the automatic weighing-machine. Little Johnny is led to it, and rather reluctantly mounts the platform while mother drops in a penny. A hand on a dial face moves upward to what Johnny thinks is nine or ten o'clock. Mother squints closely and figures the marks as fifty-eight pounds.

But no one enthuses as we did when we used the two twenty-pound and the one ten-pound weights, and ran the balance weight about as far out on the beam as it would go, and had a master of ceremonies to inspirit the occasion with lively comment. The transactions have lost all personal contact. But in the same old place and to the same old tastes, though not in the same old way, we are still selling our patrons bonbons and titbits and weighing them as we did in the earliest years of railroading.

I shall never forget any of the smallest details of that first railroad journey, so strongly were they impressed upon me. No subsequent event has quite equaled it in interest or anticipation.

We arrived at the depot two hours before the train was due. We took no chances on missing. There was no standard time. High noon was when the shadows fell straight from the house or across the road. There were no factory whistles. The old clock synchronized with nothing else either in transportation or industry.

Viewed in retrospect through a vista of forty years, two hours is no great wait. To make a dead-shot of a train it was

necessary to allow some hour or so leeway for all time variations. We cinched everything and eliminated all chance by arriving at the store-depot two hours ahead of the schedule. Then every few minutes I would run out and peer down the track and hurry back in to report.

Mother bought a ticket for herself and a half-fare for an older brother. She asked the man with the whiskers if she would have to pay anything for me. I remember how he looked me over and said my age was "ag'in'" me, but I was undersized. Then he looked me over thoughtfully as if appraising me and hefting me, and made remarks about my being stunted and dwarfish. Finally he gave it as his opinion that "Bill"—Bill was the conductor; everybody went by his first name—wouldn't say anything.

I remember mother assuring him that she had never paid anything for me before. I can see now that I was a chronic and confirmed deadhead. It shall be added that, so far as transportation is concerned, I have faithfully lived up to that earliest promise, as I still must be carried free or I do not go.

Mother's remark was innocent enough. She did not mean that I regularly traveled free. What she meant was that at school exhibitions and like "doings" I had been regularly passed in free. To this day we have the same thing—identically the same thing.

No woman now approaches a ticket window with a child at the awkward and uncertain age but that takes offense and exceptions to the ticket-agent's suggestion of a half-fare ticket. She at once comes back with what to her is an irrefutable argument—that she has never been asked to pay for him before.

Having never paid before, why pay now?

A boy is not perceptibly larger this month than the month before. He rode free last month. Now what necromancy or legerdemain has wrought the change that calls for a half-fare this month?

It is too much for any mother to reason out. She sees the boy every day. She is unconscious of changes. By and by the boy has a gangling, shanghai aspect to the ticket-agent, who breaks it gently as possible to the mother that son is now in the half-fare zone.

Mother resents this conclusion. By the grace of the dote in mother's eye and the old, old instinct of thrift against corporate greed she comes across with that unanswerable argument:

"I've never had to pay for him before."

It is a hard world. The boy has arrived. He must begin to pay. Mother can never understand why it should be this time, since she did not pay for him before.

Coming back to my own case, I escaped. I did not understand exactly what all the discussion over me was about, but somehow I knew we had gained some sort of a victory because I was inconsiderable and unimportant. We were joyfully ahead fifty or sixty cents because I was a tiny and trivial mite, a Lilliputian.

By and by the old gentleman informed us that the train would soon be in sight. Mother took an inventory of all her packages and collected everything for a hasty forward movement. Some one held me up and told me to look steadily far down the track. Could I not see a black speck?

I could. It was the coming train. Then followed a wild and delirious moment. The spot grew larger. Then there was a smudge of smoke and steam and finally a whistle sounded and a bell rang, and some monster of the infinite came down upon us with the rush of a hurricane or an avalanche.

I gave a gasp of terror and clutched my mother's garments and buried my head and shook with fright. But some one took hold of me and lifted me up, and then we were aboard for the first ride on a railway train. There was a slight jerk. The depot moved, then slid by; we were off.

It was a warm day; the windows were open. I jumped up to see things go by. Mother pulled me down.

"Sit right here and close up to me," she commanded. "Don't move until after the conductor has come through and taken up the tickets. Sit down a little farther, Johnny. That's it; and close up."

In every human being, and planted deep from the dangers of the arboreal habitats of our far-off ancestry, there are ever present the fear of falling and the terror-recoil at the sight of snakes. They are innate dreads that science has traced to their origin.

But from what far-away whenceness comes this other instinct that I and countless other small boys seem to have? I

mean that instinct which, when seated by mother's side in the car-seat and awaiting the slow steps of the conductor down the aisle from passenger to passenger, a boy feels and obeys to collapse—telescope and wither up into the minutest human bagatelle.

The conductor took mother's ticket and gave me a hard look. I stopped breathing and shriveled up a little more. Then he passed on.

THE CONDUCTOR TOOK MOTHER'S TICKET AND GAVE ME A HARD LOOK.

The crisis was over. Immediately I began unfolding, expanding, and enlarging, and in another moment had my head out of the window to see things go by. It is wonderful how certain primitive instincts survive in human kind.

That was many years before any one had dreamed of uniforms, caps, badges, or any other sort of insignia to distinguish a conductor or a brakeman. If the conductor had approached appareled in blue and with a gleaming badge on his cap and brass buttons adorning his breast and sleeves and had given me the military "once over," I would probably have evaporated entirely and this memory would never have been revived and recorded.

I do not remember that I got any cinders in my eyes. But as our fuel was cord-wood the reason was apparent. If we had been burning coal I would have collected some hot ones, as I stared open-eyed and unblinkingly straight ahead. I did not think anything could get into a small boy's eye but scenery.

I remember the brakeman as exceedingly "tacky." I thought of him only as the "hired hand—the raggedy man who worked for pa." It was a faithful impression.

There was a long blast from the engine. The brakeman rushed through the car and swung on the two brakes between the cars.

"Ma! Ma!" I asked excitedly. "What's he doin' that for?"

"He is stopping the train," replied ma calmly.

"Why are they stopping the train?"

"I don't know."

"To let somebody get on?"

"Maybe."

A BRIDAL PARTY CAME ABOARD.

"Or let somebody get off?"

"It might be."

Sudden alarm.

"It's not us, is it, ma?"

"No, no. Be quiet now. We do not get off for some time yet."

"Ma, why do we have to get off? Let's stay on."

Mother made no reply to this holiday proposition. An elderly gentleman in the seat before us explained to me that we were only stopping to wood up. When the train came to a standstill he took me out, with mother's consent, to let me see the operation of "wooding up."

Our brakeman was on a rick of wood and pitching four-foot sticks onto the tender. The elderly gentleman tried to explain to me how they must have wood to burn under the boilers to make steam to make the wheels go round. He might as well have told me of the nebular hypothesis, the affinity of atoms, or of the origin of species.

I had but one crude thought of the engine, and that was that it was alive; that it could pull like an ox and run like a greyhound. I did not know if it had legs like a rabbit or a centiped. However, the old gentleman meant well; so here's "much 'blige," and peace to his ashes.

I know now that that brakeman got only a dollar and a half a day, and that a railroad "day" in his time sometimes had as many as three sunsets. I know now that while he bawled out the names of the station stops his real high-grade accomplishments consisted in heaving cord wood and twisting brakes. Even then he was not sure of getting his dollar and a half. His was precarious employment, and men were paid only semioccasionally.

I often think of that specimen, now extinct, the Cordwoodus Brakemanus. I wonder what would be the thoughts of the modern type of passenger brakeman, trig and chic in his new uniform, polished and élite in the refinements of modern travel, if he could look upon the first of his kind as his predecessor swung on the iron wheel of the brake or hurled a four-foot hickory log from a high rick on to the engine-tender, and all for one-fifty per day, payable in the far distant henceness and in script redeemable at some country store at twenty per cent off?

At our first station stop a bridal party came aboard. A merry party was at the train to see them off. Our train tarried while all the girl friends kissed the bride good-by. Every one shook the groom by the hand, and called after them in many voices words of well wishes and good luck.

The two came into the car smiling and happy and with two carpetbags bulging with honest homespun contributions. They leaned forward from the car windows with

parting salutations. Outside there was a flutter of waving handkerchiefs that wig-wagged heart-tokens of the kindest farewells. I saw it all in wonder as my mother explained it was a wedding-party.

That was forty years ago.

Now when a wedding party takes one of our trains there is an awful uproar. Two nut-hounds dash into the car and announce the coming of the newlyweds. This unfortunate couple struggle and fight their way aboard and come into the car gouging the rice out of their eyes and ears. The bride is rattled and disheveled; the groom rubs a red spot over his eye where a well-wisher affectionately landed on him with an old shoe. All their baggage is labeled and placarded and bedecked with every imaginable line and token of derision.

There are yells, shrieks, catcalls, and general pandemonium. The bride shrinks close for protection, and the groom turns greenish pale. They are shocked and humiliated and get away in a riot.

How we do change in our manners and customs, my countrymen!

On this eventful trip I think I would have fallen out of the car window on the first mile or two if mother had not been ever watchful and held on to me with a detaining hand. By a prudent pull she reestablished the center of gravity to the interior of the coach. I was forced to sit down in the seat.

All I could get of the passing panorama was by way of a most tortuous crick of the neck that made it possible to expose one eye beyond the window-jamb.

In one way I was greatly annoyed, and much of the pleasure of the trip was destroyed. New fences had been built at all road-crossings at right angles to the track. These disappeared under the car with a slant to the cattle-guards. As we approached every fence I lifted my feet from the car-floor and cleared it. It is no slight task even for a nimble-limbed boy to jump every fence for forty miles. I probably hold the fence-jumper's record.

It was this way: You see I could see the fence approaching, and I thought it would take my toes off if I did not jump it. I took no chances. When we whizzed by a fence over I went.

I have since learned that crossing-fences clear the coaches entirely, and that I could have kept my feet on the car floor all the way in safety. I should have known that all the time, but I was not overly bright even as a boy.

However, on that trip I made one deep-seated resolution. I resolved to grow up into a brakeman. The Captain Kidd business and the Paul Jones stunts were all right in their way, but nowhere were there the prospects of such stirring adventure as riding on a train all day, twisting brakes, and piling cord-wood onto the tender.

I do not know when my enthusiasm waned or where I lost out in my calculations. I take it that when they equipped the engines and cars with air-brakes and changed the engine's diet from cord-wood to coal there was no longer anything to stir my imagination.

A sister of my mother's met us at the train. She pounced upon me with a squeeze and exclaimed:

"My! What a big boy!"

"I hain't, neither!" I protested stoutly.

The conductor was standing hard by. Coming down I knew I had been classified as a nincompoop. I had gumption enough to want to measure accordingly.

CHAIRMAN LOVETT'S POST-WAR PROPHECY.

ROBERT S. LOVETT, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Union Pacific Railroad, who recently returned to New York from a trip over the lines of the company, said:

"Big crops have resulted in renewed activity in the West, while war orders have resulted in a marked business brace in the East.

"Outside of war specialties business men throughout the country will not undertake new projects or borrow money for any great expansion until war is out of the way.

"With the declaration of peace there may be a cessation of activity in the stock market, because the country will begin to call for vast amounts of money to undertake a new period of development in which the activity in the United States will be much broader and more fundamental than at present."

HAULED 12 U. S. PRESIDENTS.

In 45 Years of Engine-Driving, William A. McDade Never Met with an Accident.

BY DIXON VAN VALKENBERG.

SYMBOL of the dominance of mind over matter, a solid gold medal, was awarded William A. McDade at the recent grand convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, in recognition of his forty-five years' continuous service on the Baltimore and Ohio. The medal was pinned on Mr. McDade's lapel by Warren S. Stone, grand chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, and the occasion was the first that such an honor has ever been conferred in such circumstances.

Tamed the Titans of the Rail.

Mr. McDade's career is an exemplification of the manner in which man can tame the most colossal of mechanisms, after having created them, and bend them to his will. As Mr. McDade grew older, his task grew harder and more dangerous, instead of simpler and safer, for though he had a constantly greater experience in guiding the giants of the rail, these giants at the same time kept getting bigger, speedier, and more complicated in greater ratio.

Yet despite the increasing difficulty of his occupation, never in all his forty-five years of engine-driving did Mr. McDade hit a rear-end, run by a target, meet with an accident, or injure a fellow employee or passenger. This record has never before been equaled on the Baltimore and Ohio system. To a man who looks so frail and little standing there in the picture beside the monster which he has made his servant, this record is a monument more worth having than any gold medal, much as he appreciates the honor of being decorated with the latter.

Unscathed and full of vigor at sixty-five, the veteran engineer is retiring only by operation of the age-limit rule to which he is amenable.

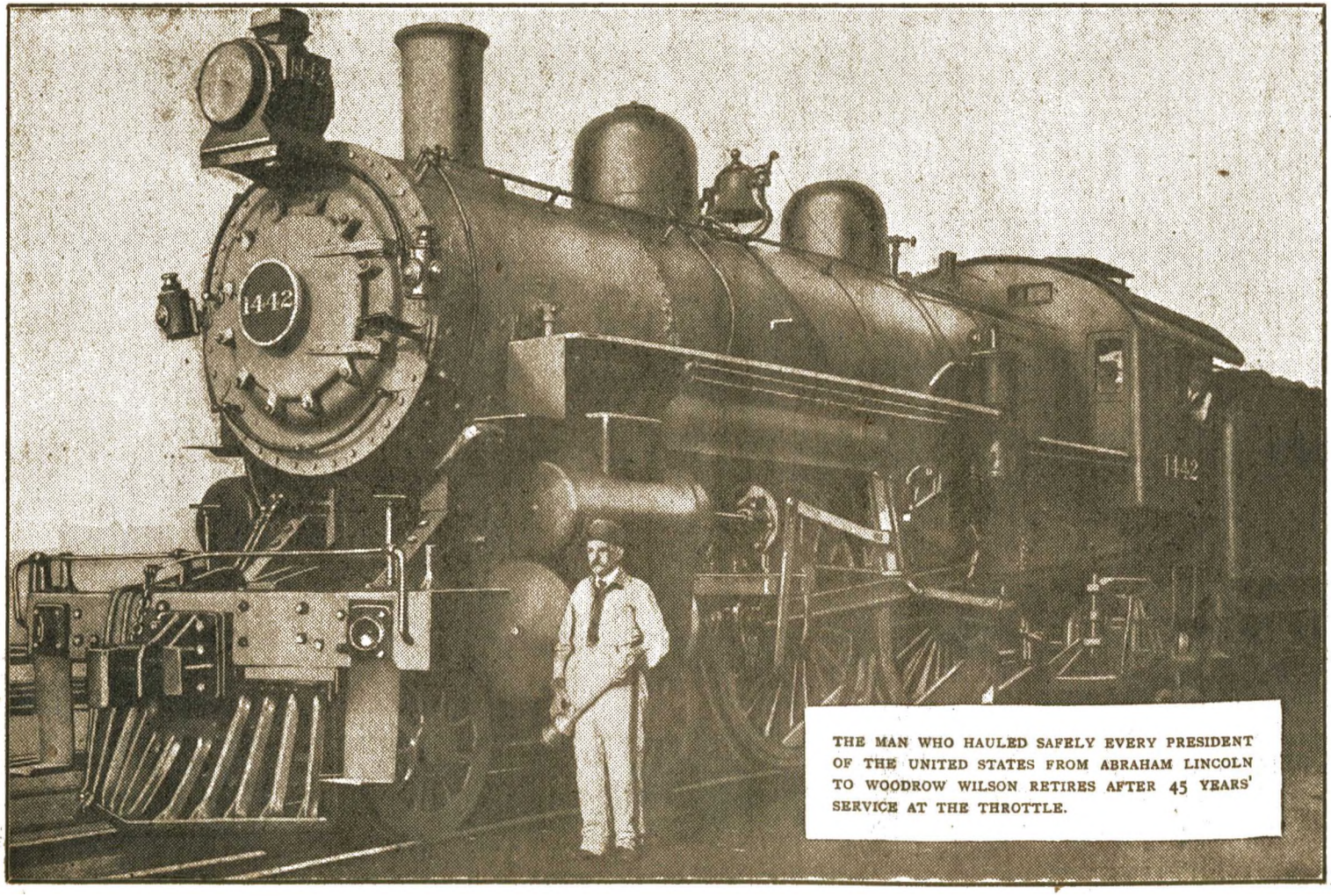
"My run during all these years has been between Baltimore and Philadelphia on what is known as the Philadelphia division. I have hauled every president of the United States from Lincoln on.

"The camel-back locomotive of my early days was soon replaced with the ten-wheeled type, then with the Mallet. I can vividly recall when locomotives had no blowers, injectors, or air-brakes. If we wanted to get the locomotive engine hot, we had to disconnect the valve and blow through the exhaust.

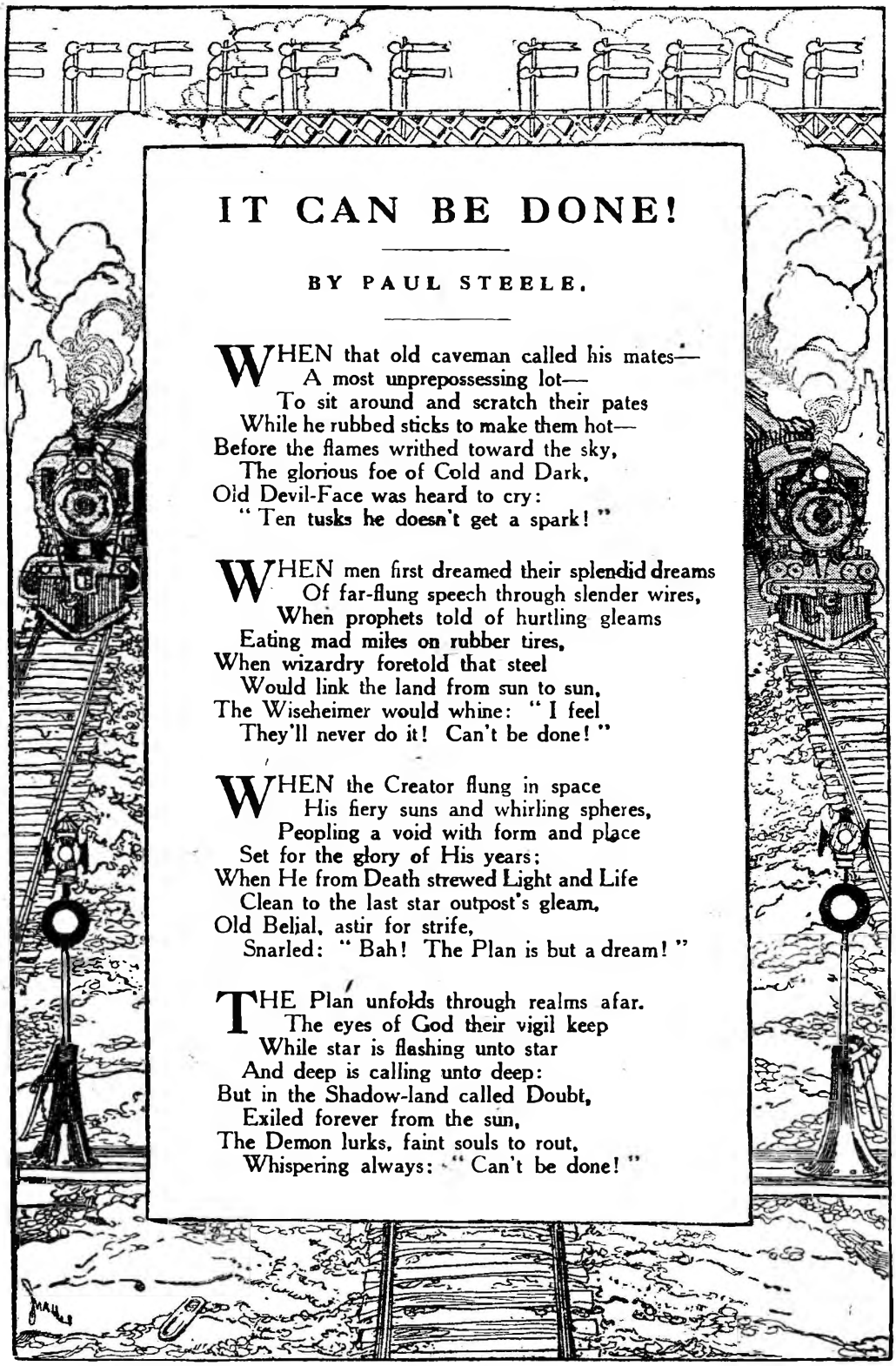
Had to Oil the Rails to Work the Pump.

"Nobody dreamed of injectors then. We were equipped, however, with a one-half stroke pump, which was connected to the driving-wheel. If we had to pump water into the engine, it was necessary to stop, oil the rails well in order to make the wheels slip, or else jack the engine up so as to get the engine off the rails and let them revolve in the air. In this crude way we'd pump water into the boiler before we could proceed.

"In the old days trains on the Baltimore and Ohio were run by convoys, or the old five-minute rule; that is, we would go to a station and wait fifteen minutes, then five additional minutes for variation of watches. This was the rule for the movement of west-bound freight and passenger-trains. If freights got tied up, passenger-trains would have to bring orders to them to proceed. West-bound movements had the right of way. There were no standard watches used."



THE MAN WHO HAULED SAFELY EVERY PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES FROM ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO WOODROW WILSON RETIRES AFTER 45 YEARS' SERVICE AT THE THROTTLE.



IT CAN BE DONE!

BY PAUL STEELE.

WHEN that old caveman called his mates—
A most unprepossessing lot—
To sit around and scratch their pates
While he rubbed sticks to make them hot—
Before the flames writhed toward the sky,
The glorious foe of Cold and Dark,
Old Devil-Face was heard to cry:
"Ten tusks he doesn't get a spark!"

WHEN men first dreamed their splendid dreams
Of far-flung speech through slender wires,
When prophets told of hurtling gleams
Eating mad miles on rubber tires,
When wizardry foretold that steel
Would link the land from sun to sun,
The Wiseheimer would whine: "I feel
They'll never do it! Can't be done!"

WHEN the Creator flung in space
His fiery suns and whirling spheres,
Peopling a void with form and place
Set for the glory of His years;
When He from Death strewed Light and Life
Clean to the last star outpost's gleam,
Old Belial, astir for strife,
Snarled: "Bah! The Plan is but a dream!"

THE Plan unfolds through realms afar.
The eyes of God their vigil keep
While star is flashing unto star
And deep is calling unto deep:
But in the Shadow-land called Doubt,
Exiled forever from the sun,
The Demon lurks, faint souls to rout,
Whispering always: "Can't be done!"

THE GIRL AND THE GAME.

BY HENRY P. DOWST.

A COMPLETE NOVEL.

CHAPTER I.

Reformation.

WHEN Ashbey Rieger made the remark, that night at the Youngsters' Club, to his friend "Wingo" Bruitte, that he guessed old Teddy Gessler was pretty near the end of his rope, he had no real appreciation of the truth in his words. For Gessler was not only near—he was practically there.

"So she trun you down, did she?" asked Flood.

"Cold," replied Gessler. "Said she'd be sishter t'me, 'n' all that. Then she p'ceeded to talk t' me like a sishter, too."

Flood grinned. "A little of that won't do you any harm, my boy."

The other drained the last half of a cocktail, of which he had not needed the first. The blurred blue eye, flushed face, and faltering tongue were signs of continued addiction.

He sighed with bibulous pathos.

"Rotten ol' world," he said bitterly. "Wha's money? Wha's frien's? Wha's anything, when your girl gives you the 'raus, eh? Wha's good of talkin' to me—hopeless jazzack!"

"You'll be all right in the morning," said Flood.

"Will I? Mornin's are worst part of the day. If I can live till ten o'clock, maybe I'll lasht out till night. Guess you're not 'quainted with mornin's, Anse."

"No, not that kind. Why don't you go to a Turkish bath and get fixed up, Ted? You've been hitting it up pretty hard lately."

"Turkish nothin'. Hey, boy! Bring us a couple more. Thish 'll be m' lasht. Then I'm goin' bed, right here 'n the club. You go home 'n' tell your sister Jeanne my heart is bushted f'rever. Tell 'er I don' blame 'er a bit.

"It's all my fault, an' she can be a sishter to me 'f she wants to; only she's bound to lose one perfec'ly good new brother, 'cause t'morrow I'm goin' to go jump into the East River 'th a loud shplash. See?"

"If you'd brace up and quit drinking," said Flood, "and act like something beside a human fish, she'd change her mind."

"She didn't shay sho," persisted the other doggedly. "She said I was hopelesh; said too many girlsh had married men to reform 'em and fallen down on the job."

"Well, that's not far from the truth, Ted. But it doesn't hurt your chances if you do your own reforming first."

"All right," said Gessler, brightening. "I'll reform—to-morrow. I'll cut out that Shteve Brodie idea. Maybe s'much water all 'f a sudden 'd be too great a shock, eh?" The witticism tickled him immensely. "You tell Jeanne I'll reform to-morrow, good and proper. Then nexsh day, after I've reformed, I'll come up t' the house 'n' tell her all about it, and see 'f she'll marry me then."

"It certainly will be in your favor, even if you reform for only one day," smiled Flood.

One could see that he was in no mind to oppose Gessler, even for that inebriate's own good. He watched the young man narrowly, appearing to fidget without cause.

"I'm goin' to bed," announced Gessler. "I got to get up early an' shtart reformin'. I c'n see it's goin' to be a very busy day."

"Wait a minute," said Flood, lifting a detaining hand. "I want to talk to you."

Gessler sank back into his chair.

"All right," he said. "Le'sh have a drink. I haven't begun reformin' yet, have I?"

"Have one if *you* want it," said Flood. "I've had enough. Do you remember a conversation you and I had the other day?"

"Not any special one—I guesh we had sevee-rial, didn' we?"

"I mean the one about the Moscow Furs Company, Limited."

"Oh, yesh. Some kind of importin' scheme. Sure I do, Anse."

"I asked you if you would—er—help me out in a promotion plan—remember?"

"Uh-huh," hiccuped Gessler.

"I told you," went on Flood patiently, "that if you would go on a couple of small notes I'd have a nice block of stock issued to you, didn't I? You don't put up a dollar; you run practically no risk. Your name on a note will enable me to finance the company nicely. You stand to make a good thing—a mighty big thing. A few extra thousands will come in pretty handy to a man contemplating—er—matrimony."

"Now shee here," said Gessler, eying his *vis-à-vis* with what he considered a snakelike cunning, "I'll do this on jush one c'ndition. You square me with Jeanne. I'm goin' to reform, an—"

"If you do reform," said Flood quite earnestly, "I'll do all I can. Jeanne's my only sister, and you know I'm not going to see her make a mistake."

"Oh, sure," cried Gessler heartily. "Tha's un'erstood. I reform to-morrow, sure's you're foot high." He reached out a large hand and Flood grasped it.

"Now len' us your trusty foun'n pen," went on Gessler, "an' the deed's done."

He scratched his name scrawlingly on the backs of the three slips which Flood laid before him. He did not trouble to examine them.

"Now, me for the hay," he yawned.

He shook hands very gravely with Flood, repeating the operation several times before his guest could obtain his hat from the sleepy attendant and escape. Then he went whistling to his room.

At about eleven next day Theodore Gessler came to himself and sat up in bed, blinking and disheveled.

His first thought was for a drink, his second for a shower. That combination had constituted a morning formula with him for a long time.

Across his brain floated hazily some dim impressions remaining from the previous evening. He was unable to think very lucidly, but at length he grasped one fairly definite recollection.

"I know," he mused. "I've reformed."

He looked at his watch.

"I've been reformed for eight hours," he brooded. "I can't say it agrees with me very well. I should say a drink in the hand would beat two reformations in the bush. I wonder, now, if to-morrow wouldn't be a more favorable time to reform. No. I'll do it to-day and have it over with." In trailing bathrobe he shuffled off to the shower.

He felt quite bad enough, physically. The longing for alcohol clutched and dragged at his consciousness, and only retreated temporarily before the swashing onslaught of ice-cold carbonated water.

But all at once a thought struck him with the cruel force of a blow. He remembered his bargain with Flood. Fine, cold perspiration moistened his forehead.

"Blast the booze!" he muttered. "I thought I was a thoroughbred, and what am I? A cheap cad!"

The sordidness of the trade he had made filled him with a loathing of himself—and of Flood. He sank on the side of his bed and dropped his head in his hands.

"I bargained with that beast like a dirty junk-man," he thought. "I did him a financial turn to bribe him to influence Jeanne. What a rotten trick! And I remember thinking at the time that I was clever and shrewd. Nobody but a drunk would do such a thing.

"I wonder what he stung me for. Probably five or ten thousand. I'd give him that much to take it all back. My Heaven, what a cheap cad I am—what an insufferable beast! I wonder if he'll tell Jeanne. No, of course not. He's as dirty as I am—and he hadn't even the excuse of being tight. *Ugh!*"

After a while he shaved and dressed slowly, and went down to the club dining-room. It was lunch time, and a dozen of his cronies were on hand with their common, futile chatter and inexpensive wit.

He refused stimulants, greatly to the amusement of all.

"Old Teddy's off the stuff," they cried. "What do you know about that? Doing it on a bet, old top? Oh, you're in love, that's it."

Their banter nauseated him; so did the thought of food. He put on his hat, rushed out into the street, hailed a taxi and told the driver to take him—

"Anywhere at all; anywhere. Out Riverside Drive, I guess. Only go like the deuce!"

At his shoulder pursued the little alcohol imps, nagging, coaxing, prodding, cajoling, commanding. He fought them off, and stopping at drug-stores along the way, tried floods of vichy or plain soda.

Toward mid-afternoon he grew a little easier. Back at the club he went to his room, ordered hot milk toast, ate protestingly, and with the aid of a big dose of a sedative powder whose use had served him in times past, finally went to sleep.

When he awoke it was well along in the evening. He rose and dressed, drank more carbonated water, ate sparingly, and packed a bag, telephoning, meanwhile, for a stateroom on a train for New England.

Somewhere up among the hills and lakes he would fight his fight, in the clear, open woods-air. He said a hasty "good night" to the lounging group in the smoking-room and disappeared.

New York did not see Theodore Gessler again for a month. And then it saw a new and apparently remodeled young man, lean of frame and clear-eyed, with a fresh, clean color and no trace of the old habits.

Gessler had so far kept his word to Flood and to himself that he had not touched liquor since that night at the club, and in the active outdoor life he had shed ten pounds of superfluous flesh, had hardened his muscles, and stifled or lulled the habitual impulse to drink.

A physician who knows says that only after eighteen months of abstinence can the confirmed drinker say that he is free of all alcoholic taint. But Gessler had gone far, at least on his physical side, to rid himself of the poison; and he hoped he had made good progress mentally.

Surely when he reentered the Youngsters' Club one afternoon he had no desire to avail himself of proffered invitations to celebrate his return with the *bon-vivants*.

"Yes, Mr. Gessler, glad to see you back," came the smiling greeting from behind the club desk. "You're looking very well, Mr. Gessler. Quite a little mail for you, sir—quite an accumulation, in fact."

Gessler slid the envelopes off the little heap one by one.

There were a few invitations, probably too long neglected for answers; some rather large bills considerably overdue, and a typewritten note from Anselm Flood, asking him to drop in at Flood's office.

Gessler hardly expected any word from Jeanne, and in this he was not disappointed.

He went contentedly to his room where he ordered a big bottle of sparkling water, which he had grown to like very well, and proceeded to make a scrupulous toilet.

It was pleasant to be back in town again, feeling so fit. No matter if those unpaid bills *were* big; Gessler would send checks in the morning to settle them.

Now that he was permanently reformed, he told himself, his bills in future would be smaller; and in spite of several years in which he had been careless in financial matters, he was still comfortably off.

He did not telephone Miss Flood of his arrival, but dined in the club café, smilingly greeting his friends, and drinking a pint of vichy with pardonable ostentation.

An hour later he trotted up the steps of the Flood domicil in West Seventy-Eighth Street.

CHAPTER II.

Catastrophe.

"YOU'RE looking tip-top, Ted," said Anselm Flood. "Too bad Jeanne isn't at home. Why didn't you telephone? She might have broken her engagement if she'd known you were coming."

"Oh, that's all right," replied Gessler, with patent disappointment. "Wouldn't have had her give up anything for the world. I'll sit and gab with you a while. Got any decent cigars?"

"Same as usual. Come on in the library. Have a little taste of Heatherbud? Real thing, this!"

"Tut! Tut!" refused the reformed one. "Three tuts, in fact. Not any more in mine."

"Good for you! Great! Never thought you'd do it. Still, I knew you had it in you if you made up your mind to it."

"There isn't any of 'it' in me now, Anse," said Theodore, beating lightly upon a firm jowl with his clenched fist. "Look! Mother's li'l iron-jawed boy from now on."

"Cigar?" invited Flood. Teddy took that.

"How's everything?" queried the guest, slumping comfortably into a big leather chair. "How's business?"

"Punk, thank you. Market's gone to pot. All the money's roosting as high as the Woolworth."

"Too bad," commented Gessler in a tone that showed a merely polite concern.

"I *guess* it's too bad," emphasized his host. "It's too confounded bad."

"What goes up must come down," said Theodore airily. "It's happened before. I've heard you financial guys cry about it so long it begins to sound like 'wolf, wolf.'"

"Not this time, though," went on Flood. "This is no 'wolf, wolf,' as you'll find out."

Something told Gessler at this point that Flood was not quite himself. He fidgeted; fussed with his cigar, which refused to stay alight; got up and walked a few nervous steps; sat down again and sighed.

"Remember those two notes you—er—backed for me the night before you went away?" Flood asked.

"Those notes? Why, yes, sure. Why, aren't they all right?"

"They are *not!* The Moscow Furs Company can't pay them. They fell due yesterday—they were thirty-day paper."

"Well, you can pay the interest and renew 'em, can't you? I've heard that's the usual way."

"Ordinarily, yes. But this is different. Money's so blame tight the banks are calling in a lot of stuff, and they won't renew."

"Oh, well, let it go, then," said Gessler cheerfully. "I'll pay 'em. Of course it's sort of hard luck—but I've plenty, I guess. By the way, Anse, what were the amounts of those notes? I suppose I'll have to hock a few bonds or something—"

Anselm Flood stiffened in his chair with every appearance of utter astonishment.

"Do you mean to tell me," cried Flood, "that you don't know what amounts those notes called for?"

"Come, come! How much?" demanded Gessler a little impatiently.

"Well, the total of those two notes is—is—"

He blurted an astonishing figure.

"Oh, what's got into you?" cried Gessler. "Don't talk woozy. Quit kidding!"

"I'm not kidding."

The news was too momentous for Gessler's immediate apprehension. His mouth opened foolishly, and he groped mentally, adding and subtracting absurd and elusive sums. The trivialty of his first lucid idea witnessed his incomprehension.

"Murder!" he said, and grinned fatuously. "I guess my tailor 'll have to wait."

"I guess he will, all right," agreed Flood dully. "What are we going to do about it?"

"'We!'" cried Gessler, his senses coming back in a flash. "'We,' you dirty crook! What have '*we*' got to do with it? What am *I* going to do?"

He clenched his big hands and glared at Flood.

"Now, Ted," began the latter, "don't get all worked up. Remember, this hits me as hard as it does you."

"That's all right; you went ahead with your eyes open. Nobody got you soused and trimmed you. Did you put your own name on the notes, too?"

"The banks didn't require it," said Flood.

"I'll hold you for it," said Gessler. "You're responsible, morally anyhow. You're rich—worth a couple of million. I *must* have been pickled. Why the deuce didn't you swing the thing yourself?"

"I'm not rich," said Flood with unexpected irritation. "You can't hold me, anyway. Remember, you signed three papers. The third was a release, in consideration of my issuing to you a lot of stock in the company."

"What's that worth?" demanded Gessler.

"Practically nothing. The blamed thing's bankrupt, Ted."

"Don't 'Ted' me, you measly skunk," shouted the enraged Gessler. "Why, you—you—you not only skinned a drunken man, you traded on my feeling for Jeanne—for your own sister! You plucked me, your friend, in the dirtiest way a man could— Do you know what I'm going to do?"

Both men sprang to their feet, Flood backing off, twitching with fear.

"Now, Ted, Ted, don't be foolish," pleaded the host. "It won't help—"

"It 'll help me," cried Gessler, advancing. "I'm going to give you the worst licking—"

"Not much, you're not," said Flood. He stepped swiftly back and before Gess-

ler could reach him, slipped into another room and slammed the heavy door.

Gessler hurled himself upon it, clutching at the knob, but not quickly enough. He heard the sharp clatter of the lock.

"Fooled, by gad!" he snarled. "Here, come out here, you—"

He beat upon the door, kicked it in a frothing anger, raged like a maniac. Then he became suddenly calm.

He made his way into the hall, found his hat, and left the house.

At the nearest street-corner stood a hotel, and Gessler entered it, seeking the all-too-easily located bar.

A month on the water-wagon is not reformation—it may be only an intermission. Gessler thought he had smothered the physical craving for alcohol. Now he knew the craving had only lain dormant.

The shock of anger and despair rang the awakening bell. He knew that, financially, he was ruined, for the amount of the defaulted notes was as great as the sum of his entire capital.

"I thought I'd beaten the stuff," he complained to himself, "but it had me, curse it! I was too late—too late!"

He ordered a whisky, then another.

Half an hour later Ashbey Rieger and Wingo Bruitte, lounging at the Youngsters', saw him come in.

"Good Lord!" said Rieger. "Look at Gessler. He's cut loose again."

"Hullo, mates," said Gessler. He was already in a state of alcoholic cheerfulness. "What say if we have little drink, eh? Boy, take the gentlemen's orders—and make mine Heatherbud."

Thus began a riotous evening. The Youngsters' board of governors next day voted to warn Mr. Theodore Gessler that a repetition of the episode would result in a request for his resignation.

But the warning was undelivered, because Gessler could not be found. At the end of a couple of months his name was dropped from the roster for non-payment of house-charges and dues.

CHAPTER III.

Silent Terry Mack.

OF course if you said to anybody a thing so bromidic as, "The old and the new world meet in New York," the answer would be given in a tolerant tone:

"Why, yes, certainly. Everybody knows that."

But if the two worlds meet, after all they touch as two circles touch, hardly overlapping. Of the millions who know the city up-town—the city of hotels, of theaters, of cafés, of clubs, of palaces and flats, few know the "lower East Side," where too are hotels and theaters and cafés and clubs and flats—but no palaces.

Until a certain "amateur night" at Sheinbeck's Second Avenue Theater, no one knew anything about Silent Terry Mack; and even after that he remained an unsolved puzzle. Some remembered seeing him hanging about Stroskolsky's or similar resorts, but when sober he talked little; when drunk, which was often, he was altogether mute.

Eddie Gowan, he of the advantageous Tammany connection, made the statement that he had seen Terry yank a Yiddisher kid from under the imminent hoofs of a pair of fire-horses. But in the excitement he had melted away, and afterward, when Eddie found him sweeping out Billy Lister's place to earn three glasses of beer, he had sworn he hadn't been in the vicinity.

Mere accident found Terry in Sheinbeck's theater on amateur night; perhaps he could not tell himself how he got in, unless it had been by shining the brass railing and signs for an admission ticket, which he would gladly have exchanged for twenty cents, currency.

When the show started he was glad he was there; it amused him and took his mind from his troubles almost as well as several drinks. He had a good seat.

There was burlesque, and an olio of "polite vaudeville"—not too polite. Then came the faltering attempts of the amateurs, the showers of pennies, and the all-too-frequent hook to blight their young ambitions. Terry, no longer silent, rocked with delight.

The big event of the evening was announced. "Rocks" Tracy, "champeen of Ate Avnyer, now in trainin' f'r 'is comin' bout wit' Knuckles Geegan," boxed two exhibition rounds with his sparring partner, Finback Kelty.

Rocks looked as big as the Aquitania, and puffed like a tugboat. Plainly his training had but recently begun, for he was padded with unneeded avoirdupois.

But he showed a shifty skill and thumped poor old Finback all over the stage, to the vast and profane delight of the onlookers.

"An' now," barked the master of ceremonies, "I hafter announce dat if any youse gents in de audeence has any experience in de manly art, Mr. Tracy stands ready to meet any t'ree, one after anoder, in a frien'ly go; an' if any one of de t'ree can stand de gaff for t'ree two-minute roun's, why de management will present him wit a fi-dollar bill. Who's de foist gent?"

This was the approved form of slaughter for which the crowd had paid its money; but for several minutes no one seemed minded to make a Roman holiday.

But at length a beefy longshoreman, considerably in drink, clambered across the footlights, and the real fun began.

He lasted one toppling round, but early in the second a couple of stage-hands derricked him into the wings and interrupted his dream with buckets of cold water.

The crowd howled; this was great!

A big teamster, with hands like pulley-blocks of large caliber, succeeded the earlier victim. Rocks chased him all around the ring, slapping him fiercely in the face with open palms. Evidently he could have knocked him cold at pleasure; but he very obligingly preferred to give the crowd something for its money.

The teamster, blind with rage, swung his flaillike arms and damaged the air about Rocks's invulnerable head. Suddenly his wrath gave place to fear, and he ran whimpering and crumpled upon the ropes, one elbow crooked across his buffeted face.

"Aw, take that big slob away," said Rocks contemptuously, and the crowd hissed the futile teamster, whom the stage-hands led to a side door and kicked into the alley, since for him to go back to his seat would have involved some danger.

"Anybody else?" demanded the announcer. "Ain't there one more gent wit' a little courage in his dukes?"

"Sure," said a voice, and the crowd craned its conglomerate neck. Silent Terry Mack walked down the aisle and extended a hand for the assistance of the announcer, who hauled him up to the stage apron.

"Name, please?" asked the announcer.

He turned to the front.

"Dis gent is Mr. Terry Mack, better known as de Harlem Murderer, or de Bare-Handed Hyena of Sixty-Ate Street West."

"Quit kidding," said Silent Terry, slipping off his coat, and holding out his hands for the gloves. The crowd saw a tall, rather thick-set young man, with a square jaw and short, straight nose.

In spite of the flush that comes of too much liquor, he possessed a certain air of confident well-being that had been altogether lacking in his predecessors.

Terry climbed through the ropes and hunted his corner.

No one in the house could have told why a big silence succeeded the hoarse buzz of comment; undoubtedly Terry was a puzzle to them. Anyhow, he was not in the least nervous or afraid.

The boxers advanced and shook hands.

"Boxed before, have you, kid?" asked Rocks tolerantly, backing away. The bell rang.

"As an amateur only," replied Terry softly. "Look *out!*"

He feinted suddenly, ducked, and swung a neat hook into Tracy's ribs.

"Ugh!" remarked Tracy. "Don't you do that again, see?"

He stabbed Terry viciously in the neck, a little low.

"My face is my fortune," jeered Terry. "Keep your dirty mits off—hi-*hi!*"

He shifted, countered Tracy's lunge, and landed hard on the short ribs. This time the pugilist made no comment. He blinked and sparred, breathing whistlingly.

The audience voiced its delight in loud comment. Here was something worth watching. Advice was forthcoming for both contestants, and it became evident that Tracy was not a unanimous favorite.

"Ata boy, kid!" shouted a voice. "Poke dat big stiff in de jaw!"

The unknown took punishment without a grunt. Tracy recognized his job, and worked at it spiritedly. Here was no opportunity for gallery-plays; it was real work.

"Here's one for you and—*ugh*—one for your owld man, you thief!" he spat, leading swiftly one blow upon another. The second landed, rocking Terry's head with an upper to the chin.

"Go it, old socks!" howled the crowd. "Don't leave dat piker trim youse!"

The bell rang sharply. Terry's two volunteer attendants would have sponged and fanned him.

"Never mind that stuff, boys," said the unknown. "It makes me nervous."

With the bang of the gong Terry landed in the center of the ring almost before the hammer retracted, and met Rocks with a quick succession of stinging jolts.

"You would, would you," grunted the pug. "How's that?"

He feinted, side-stepped, and shot a terrific right, into which he evidently threw all his strength, at Terry's jaw.

But somehow he had lost poise, and as his opponent ducked, escaping damage by a hair, Tracy collected a hook to his now tender ribs that made him gasp.

The professional reeled and Terry followed his advantage with a rain of blows, forcing Tracy to the ropes, from which he lunged into a clinch. In breaking he caught another thrifty wallop which still further damaged his fast-failing wind.

But he was too old a bird to die thus early. He stalled and shifted, plainly on the defensive, until the bell sent the two reeking to their corners.

"Gee!" said one of Terry's backers, passing the cool sponge over his perspiring face. "You're some little scrapper, kid. Where'd you git dat rib-roaster? It's a peach. Ol' Rocksy's too soft to stand much o' dat stuff, b'lieve muh!"

"Say, bo," chimed in the other, "dat punch looks like ol' Bob Fitz. How's your wind?"

"Not too good," breathed Terry. "If Tracy was fit he'd have hammered my block off before now."

"Aw, nix. Dat guy's hog fat. He couldn't lick his own gran'ma. Go on now, tear into him!"

The bell rang, and the fighters faced each other cautiously.

To Terry Mack the round, survived, meant more money than he had possessed at one time in months. To Tracy it meant loss of prestige and the concerted hisses of a fickle public.

"*That* ought to get the money," said Terry, stabbing Tracy again in the wind.

"Good Lord, kid," grunted Tracy. "Go easy, will you? You got me goat." He fell into a desperate clinch, playing a harmless tattoo on the younger man's sides. "Say, lay down an' I doubles the stake, see?"

"Not much," purred Terry. "I don't trust you. I need that five too bad."

He thrust Tracy away, pushing him back with an open hand on the professional's face. The crowd groaned its contempt.

Blind rage possessed the champion. He tore in like a tiger, seeking to rough matters, with the vain hope of landing a chance blow to settle affairs.

Terry dodged and danced about the ring, catching every blow on the forearms.

Suddenly he stopped and braced himself, his right drawn back, his left waving bewilderingly across Tracy's eyes. The professional wobbled and fended vaguely, a pathetic terror in his eyes, like that of a dog who will not dodge a kick.

"Do you want it?" rasped Terry, his fist vibrating for the blow.

"No, no, kid, no!" groaned Tracy, gulping and gasping.

"Quick, then, let 'er come!" Terry whispered.

Terry saw a strange light gleam in the spent pug's eyes. The weary muscles stiffened, and Tracy sent home a sound left, whose lack of steam should have been apparent from the front. Terry shifted with simulated awkwardness, caught the blow under his ear, and dropped.

As he lay on his side, his arms stretched limply along the floor, the referee began the count. At eight Terry pulled himself slowly to his hands and knees, but did not rise.

Tracy stood over him, fiercely eager, while the referee said:

"Nine—ten! Tracy win by a knock-out!"

A howl went up, half in acclaim, half in disappointment. The attendants pulled Mack to his feet, and he shook hands weakly with Rocks Tracy. Both turned to the front and bowed. Some of the audience started to climb up, but half a dozen stage-hands pushed them back into the orchestral pit, while the curtain fell swiftly and the mob filed out.

"Come wit' me, kid," mumbled Rocks Tracy. "I owe you ten."

"Oh, five's all right," said Terry.

"Do as I say, you boob," growled the pugilist. "I want to talk wit' youse, see?"

Terry followed to Tracy's dressing-room; there was nothing else to do. Once there, Tracy began:

"Prize-fightin' ain't a sport, young feller; it's a business. But this I'll say: In a real fight I'd 'a' took me medicine. I never welched yet, so help me. But this exhibition game is risky business; you c'n see that.

"Now I'll tell you what," went on the professional. "Come round to my place an' see me to-morrow. I've took a shine to you. I want to put on the mitts wit' you again, an' I can show you a whole lot you don't know yet, good as you are."

"Sure," agreed Terry. "I can see that."

"An' do you want that ten now, or will you wait 'til the morning?"

He eyed the younger man narrowly; something told Terry that the look was as friendly as it was penetrating.

"Ten dollars is a good deal of coin," he said.

"You bet! It's yours now if you want it."

Terry hesitated.

"Give me a dollar for a bed and a bite to eat," he said. "Keep the rest till I see you again."

"Good boy," smiled the pugilist. "I guess we understand each other, kid?"

"Yes, I guess we do," agreed the young man. "You and I'd better shake hands on that."

They gripped, and Silent Terry Mack knew he had found something he had not known for many months—a friend.

CHAPTER IV.

Rocks Tracy's Home.

TRACY lived over at Greenpoint, where you could go for a nickel via the Brooklyn Bridge.

Like all New Yorkers, Terry owned an overt contempt for Brooklyn and its environs, a sort of *terra incognita* whose fastnesses he had never explored. He found Tracy after an anxious journey which ended at about ten-thirty in the forenoon.

The pugilist was busily engaged hoeing in a diminutive garden behind a small, neat house, before which bloomed a cheerful assortment of old-fashioned flowers.

"Hullo, Murderer," said the agriculturist, grinning as well as his bruised lips would permit, and blinking as good-humoredly as he could with the handicap of a swollen and discolored eye.

"Can that moniker," warned Terry. "This where you live? Pretty swell."

"This is it," the man with the hoe confirmed. "And no mortgage, neither. Didn't I tell you fightin' was a business? Them that makes a sport of it ain't ownin' no large bunches of real estate."

Terry pondered this bit of philosophy, and found it tenable.

"Kind of dolled up, ain't you?" commented Tracy. "If you feel as good as you look, you better see a doc."

Terry cast down an eye, past the ragged coat and trousers, to his aged but gleaming shoes. Then he fingered his polished chin.

"When I go in society I usually dress the part as well as my—er—finances will allow."

"You dress it all right," rejoined Tracy, "that's a cinch. It's a wonder you wouldn't wear them white spats an' carry a cane. But the question is, do you feed it, too?"

"To the esthetic eye—" began Terry.

"If you're referrin' to this bum lamp, kid," remarked Tracy, "which you might pipe as some of your own workmanship, I'll say that it's still plenty good enough to see that you ain't had no breakfast. Likewise, you need a drink. You look pale and you got the fidgets. I know the symptoms."

"With a large fortune coming to me, enough to ration a small army, I should worry about one paltry breakfast."

"Meanin' that nine bucks? Shucks, that ain't no kink's ransom, kid. Come in the house. The missis can give you the right medicine for what ails you."

"I'd rather not, Tracy," said Terry, "if it's all the same to you. I'm not—hungry, and I—well, I don't shine in the company of ladies."

"Who wants you to shine?" snapped Tracy. "The old lady wants to see who it was had the punch that stopped her honey-boy las' night. Come along, or I quit you cold!"

Terry followed him shakily up the back steps and into a little pocket of a kitchen.

"Siddown," ordered the householder. Then, "Momma! Momma!" he called. "Commeer. We got comp'ny."

"With a firm preceding footfall, Mrs. Rocks Tracy entered from another room. The little kitchen seemed to shrink to still smaller dimensions, for Mrs. Tracy weighed two hundred and fifty pounds.

"This large party," remarked the pugilist nonchalantly, "is the only scrapper livin' that can lick Rocks Tracy an' keep him licked. Momma, this gent is the risin' young artist that did the delicate hand-colorin' on your old man's starboard lamp. Youse two has so much in common, I

t'ought you'd like to mit him. Take your corners! Wait for the bell! Time!"

"Aint he awful?" laughed Mrs. Tracy, extending a large hand. "I s'pose you're Mr. Mack. Rocks gits me so mixed up with that line of cheap talk, he overlooks the meat in the nut sometimes. And between you and me, I'm no stranger to those black eyes he brings home. If I had to shake hands with every boxer that lands on my husband's classic map I'd have an arm like a blacksmith. And you see how fragile I am."

Terry shook hands and stammered something that he thought would sound polite; it merely sounded flat.

"You ain't by any chance a relation of Mr. Cornelius Mack, of Philydelphia, are you?" queried Mrs. Tracy, twinkling at the embarrassed youth with a pair of clear and friendly blue eyes.

"Never mind the jolly, momma," said her husband. "Terry's had no breakfast. S'pose we got a coupla doughnuts in the jar? Aw, sit down, kid. You ain't holdin' no Governor's reception."

Terry sank weakly into his chair. His joints creaked and ached with every move. The unaccustomed and violent exercise of the night before had made him lame almost to the point of agony.

Mrs. Tracy disappeared into another room, and Terry heard the *pht* of a beer-cap behind him.

Tracy set the bottle, with its film of beady moisture, on the table in front of him.

"Want a glass, or rather take it outer the neck?"

Terry's hand reached for the bottle; then he drew it back and shook his head. Saliva welled behind his trembling lips.

"No, Rocks," he said weakly; "I'm done with that stuff."

"Listen, boy," said Rocks. "I've been through this game, and I know every card and trick. I've handled fighters for years, and most of 'em was booze-fighters as well as fist-fighters. Now I know what's good for you. The' ain't no sense in punishin' yourself.

"Lemme steer your little ship a few days, and I'll save you some sufferin'; and if you take my orders I'll guarantee to have you right side up in no time at all."

Terry hesitated no longer, but tipped the bottle, and the welcome liquid trickled gurgling down his burning throat. There was nothing left in the bottle but a few iridescent bubbles when he set it back on the table.

"That's the last you git till night," said Rocks.

In another five minutes Terry, with a semblance of appetite, was eating cold beef and bread and butter. Over the young man's head Mrs. Tracy exchanged meaning glances with her husband.

Tracy nodded and scowled and grinned and gestured gently. He and his substantial wife understood each other perfectly.

"Come on, boy," said Tracy, when Terry had eaten as heartily as his harassed digestion would bear. "The missis don't want us yaps clutterin' up her kitchen no longer."

"No such thing," said his wife. "You just stay as long as you like."

"Company manners!" grinned Tracy with a wink. "If you wasn't here, Terry, she'd chase me out wit' a skillet, or like as not, a flatiron. Come on before she loses her patience and grabs the poker."

"It'll be the poker for yours, Rocks Tracy," she scolded, "if you don't quit slanderin' me. Mr. Mack 'll think I'm a holy terror."

"He will, anyhow, when he knows you better," said the incorrigible Rocks. "Well, then, give us a kiss to prove I'm a liar."

"There's no need," she rejoined. "He's onto you already. Gwon now, you big boob, and good riddance. Mr. Mack can stay if he likes."

"So you'd be breakin' up me home, would you, after bustin' me snoot?" cried the delighted Rocks, turning upon Terry. "I warn you if she ever lays a finger on ye she'll crack a rib. Ye'd better get a grizzly bear to hug you."

He went out, laughing loudly at his own delicate wit, and Terry gladly followed. The going was swift for him just now.

"And I used to be there with the repartee," he mused as the screen door smacked behind him.

Under a tree behind the house at the edge of the little vegetable garden Rocks Tracy had his "training quarters," consisting of a punching-bag and shield, some dumbbells, and a trapeze.

"Sit down, kid," he said. "Get your back again' that tree and be comfortable. I'm me own trainer, and nobody can do any better for me than I can. Prize-

fightin' is a business, as I told you; an', like any other business, economy's one of the most important things.

"The boys all says to me, 'Rocks,' they says, 'you'd oughter have a trainin'-camp an' show some class. It's good advertisin'.' Well, I says to them, I says, 'Advertisin' is all right,' I says, 'and I got five good advertisements on each o' me hands,' I says, 'and when them advertisements don't bring home the bacon I'm goin' to quit,' I says. So they don't bother much.

"If I had a trainin'-camp, mind you, there'd be a swarm o' nosy guys hangin' around, drinkin' booze at my expense, and fillin' me ear wit' cheap advice. Now only a few o' them come over of a Sunday, an' I give 'em a seegar all 'round—a five-cent one, mind you—and they set a spell and chew the rag, and go home as wise as they came.

"Now the result is, I'm a regular tightwad, see? You've heard how thrifty Tom Sharkey is? Well, compared to me he's the prodigal son.

"Of course he always made big dough in the ring, the sailor did. But I usually give the crowd a good money's worth, an' while I ain't sayin' I don't take a beatin' now and then, when I'm fit I'm considered about as tough a guy as there is in my class, except, o' course, the top-notchers."

He busied himself adjusting his punching-bag, and soon the staccato *tap-tap-tap* of it rang out vigorously against the shield as Tracy circled. The fighter kept on talking a little jerkily as he worked.

"Now them fellers in the city likes a guy that makes the coin to spend it free as water. They want to drift into some barroom and grab you by the mit and tell you what a swell gink you are, an' how your style o' fightin' makes them think of old John Sullivan in his best days, and all the time encouragin' you to drink yourself to deat'—on your own money.

"Contrarywise, they don't like me, some of 'em. They know I can fight, but that ain't enough. A fighter's got to be a sport, too, or them fellows ain't satisfied.

"A lot of 'em was tickled to deat' last night when they thought you had me licked. Didn't you hear 'em bawlin' me out and callin' me dirty names and wishin' I'd get a beatin'? Sure! That's the reason—I don't spend me coin on 'em.

"I brings it home to momma and Katie —you ain't seen Katie yet— Well, for the love o' Mike, the boob's gone plumb to sleep!" Tracy chuckled, grinning to himself happily as he worked.

"They ain't no dope," he muttered, "like a string o' talk. I hope he sleeps till noon. It'll make a new man out of 'im."

Sure enough, the soft outdoor air, the pleasant, shaded heat under the tree, the soothing clamor of the tapping-bag, and the purposely singsong monotony of Tracy's dissertation had had their effect.

"Good-lookin' young kid, too," mused Tracy. "Who the blazes is he, now? He ain't no down-an'-out pug, that's a cinch. He's the class. When he wakes up I'll get him to slip me an earful o' dope—or else I ain't foxy. If I'm any judge o' game boys, this guy's got a future. I *ain't!* Now, why don't I—"

He continued to thump away earnestly at the bag; but presently, having induced a dripping perspiration, he trotted off into the house for a bath, leaving Silent Terry Mack still sleeping peacefully on the turf under the back-yard tree.

CHAPTER V.

Terry Stays to Supper.

WHEN Terry awoke the sun, which had been trying all day to get a peek at him through the leaves and had now managed to work around to an unobstructed view-point, was staring warmly at his upturned face.

The green leaves overhead and the grass under him were strange and new—he was unused to this sort of sleeping-room. On the branches of the trees he discovered a great many small, spindle-shaped objects which would some day expand into apples.

His head ached, but not so badly as it had ached that morning. He sat up and placed his back against the apple-tree and yawned.

It would be nice if some one brought him a large, cold glass of beer, for his throat was dry and his tongue far from palatable.

Beyond the stout uprights that sustained the punching-bag, shield, and trapeze lay the small garden of Rocks Tracy. Neat rows of young plants, totally wanting identities in Terry's urban mind, stretched along toward a board fence at the rear, where some aspiring vines partially masked the planking.

Outside the Tracian domain tall factories stood, storehouses, chimneys, and water-tanks. But the nearest neighbor was also a landed proprietor, whose house closely resembled Tracy's and who no doubt maintained a garden as well.

If Terry cared to turn his head he would learn that a similar estate lay upon Tracy's other flank.

A huckster came bawling along the street.

"Strah burrees! Strah burrees! Aw ripe! Two bahxes f'ra quarter! Strah burrees!"

Terry decided that it must be about four o'clock. He must get his nine dollars from the pugilist and go back to New York. He was about to make the impossible effort required to stand on his feet, when a little girl came along the walk that skirted the house.

She stopped and eyed Terry doubtfully; then she asked:

"Are you a athalete?"

Her eyes were solemn and blue, and she wore a clean little blue dress, black stockings, and stout, dusty shoes, and a blue ribbon, somewhat mussed, in her tangled blond hair.

"What's your name?" demanded Terry, returning question for question.

"Katie. My poppa's a athalete. Are you?"

"Katie Tracy?" hazarded the young man.

"Uh-huh. Are you a athalete?"

"No," said Terry. "I'm a financier. Do you know what a financier is?"

"A fine answer is when you say 'Thank you,'" said Katie without hesitation.

"Not always," he disagreed. "How old are you, Katie?"

"Five and four-thirds," said Katie. "We're going to have ice-cream for supper. Are you going to stay for supper?"

"I'm afraid not. I was thinking of dining at the Knickerbocker. The food is very good there, don't you think so?"

"Do they have fried bananas?" she asked.

"Oh, yes, when you have them cooked to order—Tuesdays and Thursdays, I believe."

"What's your name?"

"Terry."

"Terry what?"

"Mack."

"Terry Mack, will you take me to the —the—that place you said and buy me some fried bananas?"

"That would be an ambition worth striving for," said Terry.

The child looked at him in puzzlement.

"You're such a funny man," she said.

"You're a funny little girly, too," said Terry gently.

"My poppa says I'm a awful good girl, anyhow."

"The best I ever met," her new friend confirmed with emphasis. "Where's your father?"

"Runnin'."

"Running?"

"Uh-huh. He runs every afternoon. It's to make him thin. Momma says she's goin' to run, too, some day."

"I see you've met the whole fam'ly now, Mr. Mack," said a rich voice; and Terry, in confusion, hopped painfully to his feet. "Did you have a good sleep? Rocks 'll soon be back—then we'll eat. Ain't you hungry?"

"We're goin' to have ice-cream," said Katie, sidling up to the big woman. "Ain't we, momma?"

"Little old give-away," smiled Mrs. Tracy. "We are if *he* comes back in time to turn the crank."

"Could I be of any assistance?" asked Terry.

He wondered just why he made the offer, and grew suddenly ashamed, because he had proffered sweeping-out services to saloonkeepers in the hope of remunerative beer, and now forgot that his underlying motive was the instinctive courtesy of a gentleman.

"Well, you sure could," said Mrs. Tracy. "Only I s'pose it'd look like making you earn your supper."

Terry looked up and met the friendly blue eyes gratefully. A lump gathered in his throat, for he realized that amenities had been exchanged. It was a long time since—

"Not at all," he said quite formally. "It will be a pleasure."

Mrs. Tracy looked keenly at the young man.

"Katie's so fond of it," she said with abrupt irrelevance.

"Katie says she's a good girl," remarked Terry, following Mrs. Tracy toward the cottage.

"She's mother's old *love*," said the woman. "Rocks is simply noodly about

that young one. Here's the freezer, Mr. Mack. It's a three-quart size—but we eat a lot, and when there's any left over I send it in to Mrs. Martin, next door. It takes quite a lump of ice. Here, that ain't right. Haven't you never shaved ice before? Look."

Terry Mack, silent Terry, sat on Rocks Tracy's back steps and turned the crank and thought and thought and thought. In all his life he had never been more miserable—and that was going some, he told himself.

In a year of bitterness, in a strange world, he had plumbed unsuspected depths of somber want, draining the poignant dregs of degradation, and sinking ever downward into a pit whose walls seemed fitted with barbs designed to make that sinking sure and permanent.

Long ago the last failing rays of clean daylight had flickered and smothered out in the murk.

Now he was painfully awakening to a new perspective. A professional pug, a social impossible, and his crude wife—people of a sort he had considered quite unclassified, if he had thought of them at all, vulgar and blatant, full of coarse brutalities of speech, common as dirt—these people had leaned down from the pit's edge and were seeking to drag him *up* to their level. *Up!* Good Heavens!"

Standing at night in the bread-line, that pitiful, dirty army whose guidons are the tatters of its unvarying uniform of despair, he had somehow held his spirit aloof from his fellow soldiers. Silent Terry Mack, kicked into the gutter at night, returning at dawn to sweep the place out for a glass of lager and a cracker—he had *stooped* to that, he thought.

And one stoops only from *above*.

But now he had not stooped—he had *aspired* to sit on the back porch of a cheap pugilist and freeze ice-cream. He had been falling, falling, falling, as from a twenty-story window.

He had always heard that in such a case the victim "dies before he strikes." Now he knew this was not so, for he had hit bottom, and sat looking back up at the levels that he, once so far above, had passed swiftly in his descent.

"Hello, kid," said Tracy, appearing suddenly from around the corner. He was spent and blowing. "Wait 'll—I—git—me—breat'!"

He sat down on the bottom step. Clad in a heavy sweater, trousers, and sneakers, he perspired like a horse.

"If that don't put the wind into me and take the fat off, I miss my guess. Runnin's the finest and the hardest exercise the' is. I'll have you doin' it soon, boy. Oh, momma! How soon do we eat? I see you got this guy on the job. Say, ain't women the limit—they can't never stand to see no one take it easy. They always got some kinder work handy."

"You should kick!" said Mrs. Tracy, standing in the doorway. "It's your work he's doin', you big, lazy coot; and you'll eat three times as much as any of us. Only for Mr. Mack, you wouldn't had no ice-cream."

"*Mr. Mack,*" jeered Tracy. "*Mr. Mack!*"

Terry looked up and smiled at the woman in the doorway.

"I guess it's frozen pretty hard," he said.

"You've done a good job," she commended. "It's a pity certain parties don't appreciate it. Go on now, Rocks. Git your bath. Supper's 'most ready."

Terry arose. "It's time I was going back, I suppose," he ventured.

"What d'you want us to do? Send you one o' them engraved invites?" demanded Tracy in fine scorn. "Where t'ell you goin' to eat? I s'pose you got a date wit' Willie Vanderbilt. For the love of Mike, git wise, kid, git wise!"

"I have to go back some time," said Terry dully. "I might as well start. Why should I burden you? You don't owe me anything."

"Nine dollars," said Rocks.

Terry shook his head.

"For a thousand times nine dollars," he said, "I wouldn't sell this day. I 'laid down' to you last night, Rocks. What for? Ten dollars? I guess not! It was because I'm a natural quitter. I'm wise."

"I can't stay here coolin' off just to chew the rag wit' a nut," observed Tracy, going up the steps. "Me for a bath. You come along wit' me an' wash up for supper, or I'll knock your block off. I wouldn't trust you out o' me sight—not yet. Hey, momma! Unhook this screen door. What d'you mean, lockin' us out? Where's my Katie?"

Silent Terry Mack followed the pugilist into the little kitchen. What was the use?

Hobson's choice is sometimes the best of good judgment.

CHAPTER VI.

Flood Needs Exercise.

"ANSELM dear," said beautiful Miss Jeanne Flood one morning at breakfast, "aren't you getting dreadfully stout?"

"If you've made that remark to me once," said her brother snappishly, stirring three lumps of sugar into his coffee, "you've made it a hundred times."

"Then you should be convinced," said the girl sweetly. "What's that thing? It looks like a music-rack."

"Same idea," said Flood with animation. "I bought it from a chap yesterday. He was selling 'em in our building—no pedlers or beggars allowed, you know; but they get by somehow. This thing is really good, too, so I'm glad he did. You fix it up in front of you like this, and it holds your folded paper so you can read it and use both hands to eat with." He demonstrated eagerly.

"You usually do."

"Oh, don't you bother about my table-manners, sis," scowled her brother with an abrupt change of manner. "I used my hands to eat with before you were born—and long before we'd either of us heard of using from three to six different forks at one meal. Likewise, let me tell you that these little old lily white hands of mine have kept yours in silk gloves for quite some time."

"Oh, I know it, dear," she said contritely. "Don't mind my fussing—only I love to see a man act the thoroughbred—and you can if you only think. Tell me some more about the—er—music-rack."

"That's all there is to tell, Jeannie." He had lost interest. "The Giants took another game yesterday."

"I know," said Jeanne. "I was there—with the Blazzard girls and Mrs. Tate and Alfred and John Devine. Doyle knocked a home run with two men on bases in the last half of the ninth—"

"So I see," said Flood. "Fact is, I happened to be on hand myself; but I supposed little sister was playing auction somewhere, or *thé-dansant*-ing. Glad you used such good judgment."

He refolded his paper, adjusting it once more on the little stand.

"Ready for the cakes, Mary," she said. "Anse, I'm going to stop having griddle-cakes for breakfast after this. You're eating too much. You ought to have coffee and rolls and nothing else until luncheon."

"I'd be so starved at lunch-time I'd more than make it up," protested her brother gloomily. "Dieting doesn't reduce flesh. What I need is exercise."

"I'll take you on at tennis any time," she suggested.

"Not much, you won't."

"Golf, then?"

"Too slow. I'm not ninety years old yet, if I am fat."

"Horseback?"

"You know I hate horses. No; I'm going to try boxing. I used to box when I was a kid. And speaking of boxing, here's a new one. Silent Terry licked Buster Schultz last night at Mixter's Third Avenue Arena—"

"I don't know that it especially interests me," sniffed Jeanne. "There's one thing in sport that I draw the line at. It isn't sport; it's a business—and a mighty low one, too." She sniffed again.

"Well," argued Flood excitedly, "what's the matter with baseball? Isn't that a business?"

"It's different," she countered. "Besides, it's clean; it's played in the open. Prize-fighting is so vulgar—and such coarse people are engaged in it—prize-fighters are horrid and low."

"They aren't real choice, I admit."

"Lots of college men play ball," went on Jeanne. "Some of the best known players were—"

"For the love of Heaven, Jeanne!" cried Flood in irritation, "is that all you need to recommend a man—a college degree? *I* never had one—and *I* haven't done so badly, at that!"

"Don't, Anse dear," said Jeanne. "You know I didn't mean—you're so irritable this morning. Don't take everything I say as personally meant. I wouldn't hurt you—"

"Oh, I know you wouldn't. But you girls nowadays make me good and tired. I believe you'd pass up a real man any time for some silky yap with a 'Dicky' hat-band or a fraternity-pin set with fake diamonds. Sometimes I thank the Lord I never went to college—except the good old college of Hard Knocks, where a chap

cuts his eye-teeth before your A.B.'s quit wearing bibs."

"Anse, aren't you dreadful! Have some coffee, dear?"

Flood glowered at his paper, stabbing his cakes viciously. Jeanne leaned across the table and examined a sketch on the side of the paper turned toward her as it stood in the little nickel rack.

"Mercy!" she gasped.

"'Smatter?"

"That picture—that drawing of the—the—fight!" she said.

Flood took the paper from the holder and inspected the ring-side sketch made by a famous newspaper artist.

"I don't see anything to exclaim over," he said. "Pretty good picture, though."

"But this—*this* Terry," she said. "See, in the one where it says 'The Haymaker'—whatever that means. Doesn't that face look familiar—this one?"

"Can't say I see anything like that. Probably it doesn't look anything like Terry, anyhow. Those sketches are made in a hurry. Whom does it remind *you* of?"

Jeanne sighed.

"It rather suggested—Ted," she said.

"Ted Gessler? Nonsense! Not a thing like him. Not a thing. Ted Gessler? Not a bit, not a bit!"

The matter thus settled, he returned to the absorbing business of getting just the right quantity of sirup on his cakes. Then he looked up suddenly.

"Sometimes I think, Jeannie," he said, "that you used to care a little for that chap."

"For Ted? We were good friends—only he—"

"Yes, that's it. He didn't know who his friends were, that chump didn't. It was insulting, his habit of tanking up at the club and then going to decent people's houses!" Flood was righteously—and sincerely—indignant.

"He was always a gentleman, even when he'd had too much."

"A man can't take too much and be a gentleman. I'm hanged if I think you'd try to excuse it in any one but him, either!"

"Ted was unfortunate, Anselm—you know it," she said, her lovely brown eyes seriously soft. "He didn't have a chance—"

"Oh, no, of course not," jeered the man. "Chance? Why, he had the grandest little chance of any one I ever knew. His old man left him plenty of money, a good education—by George, that's just it! He's a good illustration of what we've been talking about. There's a nice example of a college-bred citizen for you. Pah!"

"Yes, his father did leave him a lot of money—too much. And he left him a lot of other things. Extravagant tastes, and no standards at all. You know how the Gesslers always lived. Their house was filled with people whose one idea in life was to have what they called a good time.

"And after poor Ted's mother died his father neglected him and spent his time with the most unspeakable people. I used to wonder wherever Ted got his ideas of chivalry and courtesy—for he always *was* chivalrous and courteous.

"I have never known a fellow whose respect for women was finer or whose tastes were so gentlemanly."

"Yes; he wore nice neckties," sneered Flood.

Jeanne sighed. There were times when she was utterly helpless with her brother. Since babyhood he had cared for her, and as he knew how to make money her life had been a pleasant one, and she was fond of him.

She told herself that this fondness was not of the bread and butter sort; yet on occasion, when the bristling rudeness of the man, the unsoftened crudities and hard angles of his character thrust out through the polite veneer of well-being which his means enabled him to assume, she almost doubted her loyalty to him.

"What an abominable speech!" she cried.

"Oh, well, what's the diff.?" said Flood carelessly. "We'll probably never see him again. I've a notion he did for himself when he found he was down and out. He was an awful quitter, anyhow."

Only with the greatest effort Jeanne maintained her self-control. She did not attempt a reply—she could not. Perhaps until this moment she had not realized the strength of her feeling for Theodore Gessler. Certainly she had been rock-firm in her determination not to marry him under the conditions prevailing during his pursuit of her.

Growing up, as she had said, without standards except those instinctive standards of manners rather than of life which had given him a pleasing and graceful ex-

terior, Gessler had seemed actually ignorant of the demands of decency upon the civilized young man. It was as if no one had ever taken the trouble to tell him what was what.

There was no coherent answer ready at her tongue's end for Flood's accusation. She knew that Gessler had gone away on the day following her last refusal to promise herself to him. She did not know that he had ever been back. She did not know of his dealings with Anselm.

How could she defend him against the charge of having quit the game, since he had apparently made no effort to break his bibulous habits, all the time aware that to do so was the one path by which he could win to her good graces?

"Do you know anything about Ted's —misfortune?" she asked at last. She would have preferred to change the subject, but somehow she was fated to pursue it. "What became of his money?"

"Booze, speculation, gambling, I suppose."

"But you—you speculate, don't you? It's a part of your business."

"I have to speculate. But I don't take needless chances. I use judgment. A man can't use judgment when he drinks."

"Why don't *you* stop, then, Anse?"

Flood bridled. Lately he had been drinking more than commonly. The need for stimulant was more insistent to-day than it had been a year ago.

He made money fast—and spent it fast. His associates were in the same boat.

He said he needed exercise—which was true. Jeanne said he ate too much—which was also the case.

But neither of these facts was responsible equally with his cocktails and highballs for the increasing waist-line and thickening jowl. His complexion spoke eloquently of a too-high blood-pressure; his frequent irritability and freakish appetite said "liver" in the most emphatic terms.

"Never you mind my drinking, sis," he warned. "I can stop if I want to. I don't care anything about it. I only do it because I have to in a business way. It's all right if you handle it right."

"You've handled a good deal of it lately, I'm afraid, Anse."

"Not so much, not so much! Don't you think for a minute it'll get the better of me. So we won't talk any more about it. How's mother this morning?"

"Very comfortable, and says she slept much better. It's Dr. Felkner's day to see her, so of course she'll put her best foot —or rather hand—forward."

"Poor old mother!" said Flood. "There's a sport for you. Ten years in bed with rheumatism, and never a word of complaint from *her*. *She* never went to college."

"If she had gone, she would have made the most of it," said his sister.

"So would I," he rejoined. "But I never did go; and I've made the most of myself without it."

"You're an old dear, Anse!" cried Jeanne. "Don't think mother and I fail to appreciate you. You've done wonders—simply wonders!"

"I guess I might have done worse," he said with satisfaction. "Some of the chaps I go up against in business don't seem to find it any advantage to have been in Cambridge or New Haven four years while I was learning the game. Good-by, sis. If you want to see Pittsburgh play the Giants this afternoon, call the office around twelve, and I'll see if I can get away."

She thanked him, and watched him as he climbed into his car and shut the door with a snap.

She was proud of him in a way—of his reputation for astuteness and for his considerable material achievements. Then she thought of another man, scarcely younger than her brother, who might have been quite as much of a figure had fate so willed.

"I suppose it was his own fault," she sighed. "But perhaps even the well-to-do need help and encouragement and friends. All the help he ever had was downward, and I doubt if he ever had a real friend. I wonder if I had a chance to be the friend he needed. If I had, it's gone now, forever. What would I do if I ever had another—ah, dear God! What *wouldn't* I do—what wouldn't I give!"

She leaned forlornly against the frame of the vestibule door.

In all this time she had never admitted even to herself the extent of her fondness for the scapegrace Gessler. Anselm's damning and final verdict concerning him had brought her face to face with herself, and she shrank back, grieved and stupefied at the disclosure.

"What wouldn't I give—what wouldn't

I give?" she repeated; and went soberly about the business of her brother's household.

CHAPTER VII.

An Instructor in Boxing.

AS the morning papers proclaimed in hysteric type, Silent Terry Mack had won another fight.

This time it was a big fight, with real winnings, and the portion of sportdom which follows the fortunes of the roped arena had, according to its fickle custom, proclaimed him favorite, the demonstrated contender for top honors in his class.

He sat in Tracy's little garden, and held the chubby Katie, now six and "four thirds," between his knees. Rocks, near by, looked up from the litter of newspapers in which he had read every last word of criticism or approval of the great event.

"These sportin' writers gives me a pain, some of 'em," Tracy grunted. "They go to a fight full o' hop or somethin', judgin' by the dope they hand the dear public. What they don't know would fill a dictionary. Listen, kid:

"'In the middle o' the ate round Terry took two hearty wallops to the face, and it looked as he was about all in. He staggered about the ring, stallin' for time, and only the gong saved him from a knockout.'

"Now, *wha'* d' you know about that?"

"Oh, I don't know," said the victor. "I seem to remember collecting a couple of swift ones about that time. Didn't I?"

"Leave us look at your map. Not a mark on it. You must o' dreamt them punches. Honest, Terry, I never seen a fighter protect his mug as good as you do. If I'd had your defense would I have a face like a picture o' San Joowan Hill to-day? Not much. I'd be one o' them young Greek gods yet—same as you."

"I don't want my face all mussed up," said Terry. "I'm none too handsome as it is."

"I always figured," philosophized the veteran, "that while a poke on the snoot hurt like fury, it didn't do the perm'nant damage of a jab in the slats. Besides, the sting of it always made me so hoppin' mad I fit better."

"I guess I don't get mad in the ring," said the younger man. "I've made a good many mistakes in my life through anger. Do you remember that first night I ever saw you—how you tried to make me sore? If you had, you'd have got my goat."

"Well, I was as mad that night as ever I was in my life. Maybe that's why you trimmed me. I called you some pretty nasty names, boy."

"Did you?"

"I take 'em all back now. And I guess I've made it up to you other ways, eh?"

"A million times. There's the postman again. Katie, girl, run out and see what he's brought this time."

The little girl came back with a fistful of letters.

"Is everybody going nutty?" cried Terry, slitting the envelopes one after another. Listen to 'em rave!"

He read a few of the letters aloud. They included all sorts of offers, from proposals of marriage to proffered engagements on the vaudeville stage.

Some announced the shipment, "under separate cover," of various more or less valuable articles of merchandise, with compliments of the manufacturers. The imminent shower promised safety razors and soap and tobacco and union-suits and hair-tonic and playing-cards and liniment and soft drinks and some not so soft.

"Them guys figure they can get you to recommend all that junk," said Tracy. "They count on you sending 'em a letter with your photo, so they can publish it. They dope it out that any fighter is so crazy for advertisin' he'll fall for any kind of bunk that 'll get his name in print. If I was you I'd give 'em all the grand 'raus."

"Right you are, Rocks. But I'll have enough goods to start a young department store."

"Well, it's all right, ain't it? All except the booze. You don't have to send none of it back, I guess."

"Hold on," said Terry suddenly, "here's a letter addressed to you. I didn't notice, so I ripped it open."

"What do I care?" said Tracy, stretching out his hand for the sheet. "I got no secrets—life's a open book. Le's see now."

He puckered an unaccustomed brow, and puzzled out the words.

"Holy smoke!" he said. "I got to read you this. It's a funny one."

"Heave ahead, Rocks. I'm listening—both ears wide open."

"It's from old Larry Corregan, a pal o' mine. He quit the fight game ten years ago, and now he's a janitor of a buildin' on Broad street." Tracy read aloud:

"DEAR ROCKS:

"One of the gents which is a tenant in my buildin was askin me this mornin did I know a guy wich would give him lessons in the manly art. He's a fat coot, one o the finanshel bugs, an hes been livin high and drinkin two much gin and he sure does need your kind of medicine.

"Now a few yeres ago I woud took this job meself but lately I got rumatizm something fearce and I aint what I useter be with me maulies. So I thinks maybe you coud take him on.

"I no you been very successful lately with that young boy that licked Buster Scultz last night and proberly got coin for the birds. but you was always a thrifty Kike and so I passes it along to you.

"It aint a bad lay neither, because this man Im tellin you of has coin and you might want backin for young Silent Terry. His name is A. P. Flood 813 Triffin building wich I am janitor of and you can call any forenoon soon. Also look me up and shak hands for the sake of old times.

"Yours truely,

"L. CORREGAN.

"PS who is your new boy. I see the fight last night he is a burd and if you Handel him rite he has a grand futur. there is more in maniging than in fiting and if I had been wise I wold of went into it myself. L. C."

Tracy came to an end, and sat eying his protegé. Terry said nothing for a long time.

The leaves overhead stirred pleasantly in the spring breeze. From the kitchen door came the musical bass of Mrs. Tracy, singing to the accompaniment of rattling tableware. Wagons rattled by in the street, and in the yard beyond the vine-covered fence children happily played and squabbled.

Terry sat and poked a thoughtful thumb into a newly discovered sore spot, reminiscent of his last night's encounter. He had supposed his bruises all checked up and cataloged.

"That chap certainly did hit in the clinches," he remarked. "My ribs are sore as a boil." Rocks Tracy snorted.

"Jumpin' chest-weights!" he snapped. "You're an aggravatin' mule, ain't you? Here I hand you the kind of a piece o' news that makes the villain in the meller-drammer hiss: 'Ah-ha! So-ho! At last, Horace Westwood, I have you in me power!' and you sit there like a big foot and growl about your sore ribs. Say, kid, you're hopeless." He spat disgustedly.

"Well, Rocksy, old top, why get excited? What do you want me to do? Present myself as Mr. Flood's prospective boxing instructor, and then pound him to a stiff cream?"

"No, but great guns, you might *say* somethin'."

"Say it yourself; then it will be sure to suit you. What's your dope?"

"Darned if I know, Terry. But don't you want to get even with this party? If any one done me dirt like that, I'd hand him somethin' fancy, believe me!"

Terry sighed, and lit a cigarette.

"I wished," said Tracy, "you wouldn't take up hittin' them pills again. You'll spoil your wind; they're 'most as bad as liquor."

"For a whole year," Terry said, "I've done everything you told me to. I didn't wipe my nose without getting a written permit from you."

"Well, you got a handkerchief to wipe your nose *wit'* now, ain't you? You didn't a year ago."

"Right, old tyrant," said Terry genially. "You're the goods, I'm ready to hand it to you. But just one little cigarette now and then till I get into training again—not many, you know."

"Don't overdo it, then," growled Tracy.

He loved Terry several ways. First, as a man loves a beautiful and spirited horse that he knows he can send into a winning race; second, as one always loves him whom he has befriended; third, as the retainer loves his master.

For Rocks had recognized early in his acquaintance with Terry the fine-bred nature of the young man, the superiority of rare blood. He doted on bossing and bullying Terry in training, yet admitted inwardly that there was hardly any condition under which the boy was not his better.

Terry never chose to show that he knew this; he had been through too hard a battle. Rare souls like Rocks Tracy, life had taught Terry, are not made to be flouted.

Fourth and last, Rocks loved Terry as a

true and loyal brother, a man among men, in whose making he had had a hand.

He looked at the boy now, sitting there in the shade, with plump, blond Katie lulled to sleep in his arms by the pleasant monotony of talk, "Uncle Terry" she called him.

And Mrs. Rocks always sat up nights to hear the news of each succeeding triumph in the ring, a triumph in which she shared, partnerwise, with her husband.

All these things crossed Silent Terry Mack's mind as he sat and drew deep, delicious clots of cigarette smoke into his throat.

For some unanalyzed reason he could not summon up his old resentment against Flood. The man had tricked him—yes, shamefully. Flood had stripped him and flung him out pitilessly among the wolves of his own degraded habits—wolves that had pursued and all but pulled him down and devoured him.

It had remained for his enemy, the man he had clambered across the footlights to beat, to draw him up out of the reach of the pack and save him to himself.

True, Tracy had made of him something society chooses to blacklist—a common pugilist. But Tracy had done his best, given of his best, and, according to his lights, made a clean job of it.

Tracy was honest and loyal, and had taught the shamed and skulking Terry Mack who had once been the dissipated Ted Gessler, the inner meaning of brotherhood and kindness.

Life to Terry the fighter looked peaceful and worth while. His social—or rather his "society"—instincts had gone a Maying, along with his silly love of idle excitement and alcoholic excess.

"Well, Rocks," he said, "I don't know—I don't know. Flood trimmed me, it's true. But suppose he hadn't? Suppose I'd kept my money and gone on living the life I used to lead?"

"Fishbones!" said Tracy. "Wasn't you on the wagon when he sprung his little game?"

"Yes; but see what a quitter I was! If I'd been the man I am now, do you suppose the loss of the money would have pushed me off again?

"I'm pretty doubtful if I'd have lasted long, anyhow. My surroundings and my associations didn't favor it. In that world, Rocks, a young fellow who doesn't hit up the stuff is out of it. The pressure is too strong.

"None of the chaps who hang about the clubs I belonged to like a man who won't drink. He's a sort of wet blanket—he doesn't fit. Only the exceptional man can get away with it, and I—well, I certainly wasn't that sort of man. I've seen 'em try it—better men than I—and fall down hard."

"Then all I got to say," said Rocks with vigor, "is 'raus wit' them kind of people. Oh, I know there's a lady present—but she's asleep."

"Then why should I bother my head about them?" queried Terry. "You and I are making some money—pretty easy money, too. They say 'easy come, easy go,' but we'll beat that game.

"Once we get a few thousand working for us in the bank, we're fixed. How would Mrs. Rocks and the baby"—here he checked himself, and gave little Katie a gentle squeeze—"how would they like a good ranch out West—plenty of air and sunshine and wind—horses for us all to ride, including Katie?"

"I'd be a peach on a buckin' bronco, now wouldn't I?" commented Tracy; but his eyes glistened at Terry's picture.

"I guess I get you, boy," he went on soberly. "Prob'ly you're right. But just the same, I'm goin' to have a slant at this Flood party. I want to see what kind of a gink it was that put the skids under you.

"Besides, I might charge him ten or fifteen bucks an hour. Kind of a joke on the geezer to make him help pay for our ranch, eh?

"And say!" His face wrinkled with the drollery of his idea. "You wouldn't mind if some day durin' a lesson, you know, I took just one good punch at him, would you? Long as you don't seem to want to lather 'im for yourself?"

CHAPTER VIII.

Through Storm and Dark.

NEXT day the blinds of the little house at Greenpoint were drawn, and the doors locked; for the Tracy family, including Terry Mack, in order to escape the horde of unwelcome visitors who flocked into the neighborhood to see or interview the new celebrity, took itself off into a place Tracy knew in the country, where there

were trout-streams, and fresh country milk for little Katie.

On his way up-town Rocks called on his friend Larry Corregan, who introduced him to Flood.

"That feller ain't got a honest bone in his head," Tracy reported to Terry, as the train pulled out of the Pennsylvania station. "But he sure does need my kind of medicine. He's hog fat, his liver has walked out on him, and about all the other organs he's got has gone on a sympathetic strike.

"I told him I'd be back in a couple of weeks and start him in; but say, I'd as soon hit a bag o' hot Indian puddin' as punch him. He's that squshy! He wheezes when he breathes like a horse, and the booze tries out at every pore.

"He was all feather-white to hear about the new 'fistic prodigy,' as he called you. He didn't see the fight—got playin' poker at his club an' forgot it. That's lucky for you.

"He wants to know how's my finances—see? That means he's hungry for a slice of the profits if he can be a sort of 'angel' for you. I was independent as a hog on ice—said money was easy, and I didn't need no assistance handlin' this boy o' mine.

"He says, 'Tracy,' he says, 'there's a lot in doin' it right. You got to advertise. You got to keep the papers full o' Silent Terry dope, an' stim'late interest,' he says, 'so's t' git a big gate next time he fights.'

"I says you was kind o' considerin' quittin' the ring altogether.

"That didn't jar him none. He says, 'That's the stuff. Give that to the papers. It makes 'em hungry for more. It's the best dodge ever!'

"The skunk! He's just stickin' out all over with ideas for corrallin' the coin. Say, Terry, if I wasn't a square guy, we could frame that boob out of pretty near as many dollars as he stole from you."

"I never said he actually stole from me," said Terry.

"You don't have to say it. I know it. I'm goin' to find out how he done it, too. He's slicker 'n hot tar, an' twicet as nasty. He's skin his own mother for glove-leather."

The Tracy family did not go to the big hotel by Lake Callayoga, but sought a small rustic cottage a couple of miles to the north, nestling among the trees on the shore. Tracy had rented it from Miles Keegan, a saloon-keeper friend.

Here the swift days passed and Terry rested after his long winter of training and boxing. He fished and rowed and tramped and kept himself in condition; he played with Katie, taught her to swim, took her fishing, and behaved in every way as a little girl's uncle should.

Mrs. Rocks, busy and contented, sang as she tidied the cottage, cooked the meals, or sat on the piazza sewing placidly.

The only drawback in the situation for Terry was that it gave him too much time to think.

As long as Rocks stayed with them, the two kept on the go from dawn until dark. But at the end of a fortnight he must return to town, mindful of his profitable engagement with Flood, and of the more important business touching on the best possible match for his "boy" in the early autumn.

Maybe with a suitable chemical formula the well-known fast-color qualities of the leopard might be altered to the homely hue of a Maltese tabby. But Terry Mack was Theodore Gessler still.

He thought he was satisfied to be Terry Mack, and was shocked when he realized that this was not so. The refinements of blood and family were his by birth—the daring and hardihood of the successful boxer owed their existence no less to a strong ancestry of sportsmen than to the careful tutelage of such a veteran of the ring as Rocks Tracy.

Terry loved the Tracy family because he was by nature generous and loyal and touched with the noble democracy of sportsmanship. If he but realized it, every drop of blood in him had contributed to his physical and spiritual rehabilitation.

He was a man of breeding who had shucked off the ignoble garment of a mistaken youth.

His walks took him frequently into the vicinity of the great hotel. And thence floated sounds of his sort of civilization—soft music of orchestras, modulated voices of women, laughter of high-spirited men tramping the broad verandas.

This life sent out invisible but none the less steely tentacles and pulled upon the Gessler in Terry Mack—it was his life, his world. He might not know a soul at the hotel by name—but his own aristocracy made him the blood-brother of every one

there whose presence was acceptable by reason of breeding or caste.

Of this the first realization came to him with pain and loathing. It made him hate himself. He had forsworn his kind, and cast his lot with these amiable aliens, seeking to harmonize and fraternize with them on common ground.

Feeling the pull of the old life, he condemned himself for a traitor to faith and honor. What could be finer than the friendship of the Tracys, than their devotion and kindliness?

To them he had come, a dirty, down-and-outer, a tramp. At hazard they had taken him in and trusted him and brought him up to manhood.

Now he found himself once more a twenty-story denizen, back whence he had fallen, on a level far above that to which they had lifted him from the pit of his disgrace.

He did not look *up* to them any more.

He knew that concrete facts did not justify him. He was what Rocks was—a professional boxer, a prize-fighter, dependent for his hazardous bread upon a pair of large, sinewy fists which, by a certain natural aptitude, early training, and the scrupulous teaching of Rocks Tracy, he was able to hurl forcibly into the vulnerable organs of other men in the same deprecated calling.

Rocks, and the large Mrs. Rocks, and plump little Katie would not understand that there could be any social difference between the roystering Mr. Theodore Gessler and the hard-working, hard-hitting Silent Terry Mack—or, if there were such a difference, it was all in favor of the pugilist.

Thus, a little hopelessly, the young man began to wish the summer's holiday nearer an end, so that he might go back where nothing would remind him of his other self, and where in the strenuous work of preparation for the coming fight, he might forget the social distinctions which now irked him.

Rocks wrote optimistically of his plans for fall. The man he was after needed money; he had held off a long time, dickering over such matters as the division of the purse and gate receipts; over the selection of the officials; over the various other technicalities and advantages of rules and weight.

But he was making progress. He would end by having about everything his own way. He wrote:

> For the guy is broke. He's spent his coin in righteous livin and blown it all for the jackpots of Egypt, wherever that is. He can't stand the gaff much longer—he needs the money. It s just as the old woman said, them as has gits.
>
> And say, I ain't done a thing to Flood but put him through the finest course of sprouts ever. William Muldoon's methods compared to mine looks like playin "hunt the peanut."
>
> But I don't like him. He's so crooked he could hide behind a corkscrew. I'm getting wise to his game, and by the time you come home I can tell you what become of your money, an how to get it back if you want it —that is, if you *do* want it.
>
> Judgin by the contemptible way you spoke of it before, I suppose youd look on it like it was snakes.
>
> Anyway, it might give you some satisfaction to know how he put the rollers under you.

This was disturbing to the Terry that had been Ted; for it set him to wondering what it would be like to be rich again.

True, he salved his conscience by telling himself all the nice things he would do for the Tracys. But he had lost the fine contempt for wealth he had felt under the apple-tree in Greenpoint.

He began to be more miserable than any healthy young man, living on the shore of a lovely mountain lake through a delightful summer, has any right to be.

Then something happened.

Terry was awakened one night by frightened cries from beyond the thin partition bounding Mrs. Tracy's room, where Katie slept beside her mother.

He hopped out of bed and got into his clothes, calling:

"What's the matter, momma? What's the matter?"

"It's Katie," called Mrs. Tracy, her usually calm voice shaken with terror. "It's Katie! She's terrible sick!"

In quick-awakening haste Terry finished dressing. Mrs. Tracy in wrapper and slippers, quite beside herself with terror, held the stricken child in her arms.

Katie had never been seriously ill—now she squirmed with pain and cried piteously.

In the matter of advice, Terry's inexperience made him all but worthless. In a vague way he was aware of the general efficacy of hot water, inside or out.

"Come to Uncle Terry, Katie girl," he invited, "and let momma get you something to make you better."

He took the child in his arms and held the little quivering thing as soothingly as he could while Mrs. Rocks tried to make a fire, most of her accustomed facility turned to a puttering all-but helplessness. Repeated waves of pain attacked the little girl, intermitted by periods of comparative ease. When at the height of their intensity Katie writhed and screamed.

"Oh, dear!" bewailed the frightened mother. "What made us ever come to this forsaken place where there's no doctor and no telephones nor nothing? All the medicines I got is a few antibilious pills an' a little mite of whisky, an' prob'ly either of them would make her worse!"

She gave the sufferer some hot water, and laid a steaming cloth across her pain-distended abdomen.

"You take her, momma," said Terry. "Your fire's going and you have hot water. If she gets much worse, try a little of the whisky with it. I'm going to the hotel and hunt a doctor."

He laid Katie on her mother's bed, and, hatless, slipped out into the darkness. It was raining hard, and the narrow woods path leading to the main road must be followed by feeling and instinct, for the eye was of no service.

Unfortunately the Tracys' lantern had been broken within a day or two, and not yet replaced.

He made haste slowly in the utter darkness, for the path crossed open spaces where it would be easy to stray. Walking with both hands extended and oscillating constantly to touch the thick growth that lined the way, he made fair progress

But at each patch of cleared land, where these guides ceased, he had to stop and calculate distance and direction, plotting his course by dead reckoning and seeking ever to visualize the path he should follow.

It astonished him to realize how unobservantly he had traversed this route again and again when the need for observation had been least. Piles of firewood, fallen logs, bits of fence, trees of more than ordinary size existing at various points, must be recalled and sought out by touch as he progressed.

He learned how futile is the common boast of familiarity whereby one presumes to say:

"Why, I could go *there* with my eyes shut!"

At last he won to the open road, floundering upon it from a flooded ditch. He stopped a moment, dazed, lest he should in his confusion take the wrong direction.

The pause served to restore a little his failing wind.

"Lucky I'm in pretty fair trim," he muttered, and broke into a clumsy, slopping run.

At the big hotel the evening was yet young. Hemmed in by the defying elements, the guests compensated themselves for the loss of usual summer evening pastimes by the comforts of indoor life.

There was dancing in the spacious music-room. At tables about the lobby and parlors elderly quartets struggled earnestly at bridge. Heavy logs burned cheerily on a wide hearth, before which half a dozen men in evening clothes discussed the destinies of European powers.

Behind the desk a bored night-clerk toiled over the intricacies of an uncommonly difficult picture-puzzle borrowed from the newsstand. The wind-and-rain-beleaguered piazzas invited none, although in certain sheltered nooks a few whispering couples avoided the bane of chaperonage.

Then came a succession of unsteady, squashing footsteps upon the planking, and a disheveled figure thrust open the heavy door and wavered dripping across the polished floor and mossy-soft rugs.

The bored clerk looked up and saw a battered and fatigued young man leaning upon the desk.

The clerk was an aristocrat in his way, which the intruder plainly was not. For he was plastered thickly with mud, and upon his face were the sanguinary traces of his passage through the woods.

With the lightning immediacy of well-trained clerks, this dignitary decided that the visitor was a victim of his own bibulous tastes. His greeting was a mere stare of disfavor and unsympathy.

"'S the doc—doc—tor—here?" gulped the breathless Terry.

"Doctor?" queried the clerk, with fine intelligence.

"'S what I said—said; doc-tor. And quick, too."

"The house doctor is about," said the clerk coolly. "But he's engaged."

"I don't care how engaged he is," said Terry, his breath coming back into some-

thing like regular operation. "I want him—right away. It's a matter of life and death—a sick baby."

"I'll call him; but he won't want to go out in this weather. Front! Call Dr. Raymond; he's in the smoking-room."

Terry trailed after the boy. Dr. Raymond looked up with quick annoyance from a sizable stack of chips.

"Gentleman wants you, doctor," announced the boy.

The doctor did not rise. He merely laid down his cigarette and eyed his visitor sidewise.

"Well, my man?" he said.

Terry ignored the implication of his peasant status and plunged into the business of the occasion.

"Probably nothing but a colic," diagnosed the physician. "Wait—I'll run up to my room and get you something. Here, Walter"—to an onlooker—"play my hand a few minutes. I hope you don't manage to queer my luck."

He rose and walked along the hall toward the elevator. Terry followed.

"It won't do, doctor," he said.

The doctor stopped, irritated.

"What won't do? You don't think for a minute I'm going out in this mess of a night, do you?" A shade of truculence was in his attitude.

"That's what I came for," said Terry quietly. "You've a motor, of course."

"It's—out of commission."

"You were driving it this afternoon; I saw you."

"Now, look here, my man," cried the physician sharply, "you can't talk to me like that, you know. I don't—"

"Listen," said Terry. He held up a hand—a dirty hand, but vibrant with an authoritative something which impressed Dr. Raymond. He stopped in the midst of his protest, just as he would have done at a command from his richest patient. He did not know why.

"I'm telling you the truth, Mr.—er—"

Terry Mack hesitated for the space which divides one second from the next.

"Mr. Gessler," he replied; and there was the faintest hint of stress on the "Mr."

Dr. Raymond was a New York practitioner, to whom the name of a rich and aristocratic family meant something. He did not consciously admit it, but the "Gessler" rang a little bell somewhere in his department of self-interest.

"If I could get a car now," he hesitated.

They were standing in the lobby; and the incongruity of their association—the dapper, dinner-coated doctor and the trampish intruder—caused a little flutter of excitement among the loungers and bridge fiends.

"Is there any trouble, doctor?" asked a solicitous voice.

Both men turned to the speaker. Ted Gessler—since he had chosen for the time being to resume his proper identity—felt an odd, clutching constriction at the throat. Next succeeded a strong impulse to pull his head down inside his wet collar, to drop on all fours, to shuffle off turtle-fashion under the near-by news-counter.

For the voice was that of Miss Jeanne Flood!

CHAPTER IX.

Terry or Ted.

SHE was in a simple, unextreme evening gown. Out of the corner of his eye he saw that her face and throat were becomingly browned by wind and sun. Glancing down, he observed the lightness of her satin footwear—because she was saying:

"If it's really so serious, I can take you in my car, doctor."

"There's a sick infant—child, rather—at a cottage on the shore beyond Stevens's Point," explained Raymond. "I'm afraid I really ought—of course I'd much rather send something and go over in the morning—but this—er—gentleman seems quite insistent—"

"Of course," said the girl, with quick sympathy.

To her it made no difference whether the applicant for medical attention be nabob or navvy.

"You get your case, and I'll go for my heavy coat. I'll be back as soon as you, doctor. Mr. Bliss—oh, Mr. Bliss"—this to the puzzle-enthralled clerk—"please call the garage and have my car sent up at once."

She and the doctor disappeared behind the sliding-door, and the elevator wafted them upward, while Gessler wandered back to the porch to await the coming of the car.

As it slid under the high *porte cochère*, its two big lights stabbing the misty dark-

ness, Miss Flood and Dr. Raymond issued from the doorway. After them came six protesting matrons and two admiring young men.

Ted overheard one say:

"Pretty good sport, that girl."

He was quite sure that as yet she had not recognized him.

First, he was much thinner than when she had last seen him, at which time his self-indulgence showed itself in a certain unbecoming pouchiness of face. Next, he was thickly disguised with mud.

And more than that, her attention had been heretofore given almost exclusively to Dr. Raymond.

Now she spoke to Gessler, in the dimness of the porch:

"We'll let doctor ride behind. You'd better sit with me to show me the road."

He slid into the bucketed seat beside her, and the car shot singing into the night. He peered intently at the rutted road that came hurrying out of the blackness to meet them. All Jeanne's attention was needed to keep the wheels upon their errand.

To the point where the cart-path left the main thoroughfare was not over half a mile. Ted held up a hand and said a word.

"Here."

The wheels locked and slid in the slippery mud. Ted got down and crossed the bridge over the ditch—the bridge which, in the darkness, he had missed on his way out. He pulled aside the bars of the pasture fence.

"Will the bridge hold?" asked Jeanne when he came back to the car.

"Oh, yes. Heavy teams cross it," he answered.

In the gloom he saw Jeanne's face suddenly turned his way, and knew that the tone of his voice had touched some inner note of memory. She swung the car carefully across the bridge, and entered the path, a way so narrow that it must be threaded with painful vigilance.

From the time Terry Mack left the Tracy cottage until Theodore Gessler returned with his recruited assistance had been considerably less than an hour. To him his halting achievement seemed to have used half a night; and poor Mrs. Tracy said she thought they wasn't never comin'.

Dr. Raymond, the pictures of jackpots and flushes erased from his mind by the fresh, wet air, showed a real interest in a case which he was free to admit demanded his personal attention.

"It's a good thing you insisted, Gessler," he said.

At the name, Jeanne, who had thrown aside her coat and proffered prompt and sympathetic aid to the worn and terrified mother, turned quickly and stared at Ted.

Then she walked up to him, looked past the barrier of mud that veiled his full identity, and said:

"Why, so it is!"

"Sh!" warned Gessler.

"Oh!" said Jeanne, and turned away.

The doctor, busied with measures for diagnosis and relief, missed this by-play; and so did Mrs. Tracy.

Gessler went in search of water, soap, and dry clothes. He was as fatigued and sore as he had ever been following a hard match; and his mind was a chaos.

Problems, many and complex, had sprung up this night, as if every rain-drop were a dragon's tooth, and each the seed of a soldier of doubt, fierce and menacing.

But none challenged as yet. The two women and Dr. Raymond ministered to the sick Katie, with such results that she presently fell asleep in Jeanne's arms. Mrs. Tracy, in thankfulness and relief, went to make coffee in the little kitchen. Dr. Raymond, complacent from the sense of a professional conscience duly propitiated, leaned against the chimney-shelf and lighted a cigarette.

Gessler, bathed and presentable, knew he could not with decency stay in the seclusion of his room, much as he wanted to do so.

"Have one, Gessler?" invited Raymond, extending his case.

"Thank you."

Ted stooped and picked up a brand from the hearth.

"You're something of a hero, I judge," commented Raymond. "It must have been murderous, finding your way to the road in this darkness. It's absolutely inky. I wonder if any of your bruises need attention."

"Oh, no."

"I fancy you know how to take care of yourself—this place smells of witch-hazel as strong as a—"

"It's great stuff."

"Nothing better. What are you doing—training for something?"

He swung an appraising eye about the

living-room, noting the various equipment of physical culture—boxing-gloves, dumb-bells, chest-weights, and allied merchandise. Also he took in the character of the pictures tacked up about the walls, many of which illustrated the postures of well-known fighters.

"Oh, just sort of—a—keeping fit, you know," answered the prize-fighter, painfully embarrassed.

Oddly enough, Jeanne sat rocking little Katie, and made no slightest effort to join in the talk. But her searching gaze hardly left Ted's face for a moment, except when she looked tenderly at the child.

"Are you one of the New York Gesslers?" asked Raymond idly. Ted did not remember knowing him and hoped the doctor had never heard of his particular brand of Gessler.

"Oh—yes, I was until a year or more ago. I've been away lately."

"Traveling? Great! You chaps who can do that are lucky. We doctors have to make good a long time before we can take a year abroad, unless we go to some place to study, and you know that's no great recreation. Where've you been—what countries?"

"Oh, I've seen something of a good many—a bit of Italy and a lot of Ireland, a little of China, and a dickens of a lot of Russia."

"Moses!" commented the doctor. "That is a funny assortment. How'd that hap—"

"I don't know how good this coffee is," came the rounded tones of Momma Tracy, pushing through the kitchen doorway with a tray of steaming cups. "It'd be better, but I didn't have no egg to put in it.

"The best cup of coffee ever made wouldn't be good enough for you people. I'll never live years enough if I git as old as Mafoozzalum to thank you folks for all you've done for me. Think of it—comin' down here in the mud and rain in the middle of the night!

"Miss—Miss Flood, I guess you're the dearest lady in the world. Ain't Katie too heavy for you? She's such a big baby—bless her heart! Mother thought she was goin' to lose her. Ain't she lovely, Miss Flood?"

"Oh, no, don't take her—let me keep her. I love to hold her—she's so snuggly."

"Well, don't let's spill no hot coffee on her. Hadn't I better put her in bed?" She stooped to lift the child, but Gessler sprang forward and stretched out his hands.

"That's right, Uncle Terry 'll take her. I guess if it hadn't been for Uncle Terry—"

Gessler, half-way to the bedroom, turned. Mrs. Tracy was following him with fond, motherly eyes. The lids of one of Gessler's puckered into a warning wink in which there was a kind of fierceness.

"My goodness!" exclaimed Mrs. Tracy. "What—" She checked herself, then bustled into the kitchen. "I got some toast on the fire—I guess it's burned to a cinder."

In half an hour the doctor assured Mrs. Tracy that all would be well with the little girl, and that it would be safe for him to leave. He would drop in some time next day.

To the young man he said:

"I hope I shall see you again soon, Mr. Gessler. Can't you come to the hotel for dinner some evening? I rather imagine you might have some interesting things to say about—travel, and so forth."

The two shook hands gravely. But Jeanne, between whom and Gessler half a dozen sentences had not passed that night, only looked at him in a sort of puzzled wonder, murmured a quiet, "Good night, Mr. Gessler," and went away with Raymond in the murky dawn.

When they had gone Mrs. Rocks said:

"For Heaven sakes, Terry Mack! What's got into you? You like to jumped me outer my skin with that wink."

"Forgive me, momma," said he. "I was rattled to death. Don't you know who that girl is?"

"Flood—Flood? Miss Fl— You don't say that's *his* sister? The feller who—Well, what do you know about that! When they called you by your right name you could knocked me down with a pavin'-stone."

"Oh, momma," groaned Terry, "I don't know whether Gessler's my right name or not. I guess I'm Terry Mack, after all. Now Katie's all right, I'm going to bed, if you don't mind. Wake me if you need anything. Good night."

No one at Callayoga Inn, the big hotel on the hill, recognized in the rather magnificent young man who trotted up the veranda steps on a sunny summer afternoon the bedraggled and water-soaked

tramp who had invaded that sacred precinct two nights before.

Perhaps the picture-puzzling clerk would have done so, but as he was a night man he was off duty.

To the few lonely maidens on the piazzas Gessler was all but dazzling. They surely took no note of the slightly hesitant manner of his approach.

It required a good deal of courage for Gessler to come at all—but he felt that he would need more to stay away.

On a blank card at the desk he wrote "Mr. Theodore Gessler," and a bell-hop, with a quarter in his receptive palm, scurried off with it to Miss Flood's apartment.

Ted waited nervously in one of the small, ornate reception-rooms—"padded cells" the hotel inmates called them.

Miss Flood had just returned from motoring and would be down shortly.

What was he to say to her? He had pondered the problem all the way up the hill. There were explanations due her—how much should he disclose and how much should he hold back?

And how about Raymond? Did Raymond know him as *a* mere Gessler, or as *the* one particular Gessler of the clubs and cafés?

Fate would answer these questions, anyhow. The outcome depended upon many things, of which the principal one would be the extent of Jeanne's knowledge concerning himself.

She might know already so much that to tell her anything at all would be unnecessary. She could not know how her brother had served him—and he determined that from himself she should never know.

"Hello, Teddie," said a friendly voice.

He looked up. Jeanne came forward with the same old cordial smile, the same boyish handshake that had been hers in the old days. Ted's heart turned a flip-flop.

"Hello, Jeanne," said Gessler.

A heavy embarrassment invaded him, numbing him like a drug.

The girl sat down near by and looked him up and down with a connoisseur's eye.

She was more beautiful than she had ever been, he thought. To the sparkling essence of her girlhood was now added nearly two years of development, of experience.

She looked more serious. Back of her lovely eyes dwelt purpose and sympathy and—yes—understanding.

"How splendid you look, Ted!" she said.

"I—I feel pretty good."

It was a childish rejoinder, and fatuous, he thought. The silence of long reserve sat heavily upon him, and he was embarrassed to the point of tremor.

"I can't help wondering," she began, and stopped, a little of his confusion reflecting in her face. "Perhaps, though, you would prefer not to have me ask too many questions?"

"Go on, go on," he blurted. "I guess that's what I came for. Ask all you like—don't mind *me*."

"I don't know where to begin. It's been so long and so—so mysterious, hasn't it?"

"Has it?"

"Why, of course! A man can't drop right out of your life like a—like a lost fish-hook—and fail to excite some interest."

"I'm a lost fish-hook, all right," he grinned, a little of his boyish habit of ease stealing slyly back. "A fish-hook that didn't catch anything."

"Maybe you didn't use the right bait," said the girl.

"I was too fly," he said. It was a small, cheap witticism, and he blushed for it.

But Jeanne laughed deliciously.

"You haven't changed such a lot," she assured him.

"That's too bad; I hoped I had become a different—person."

"Tell me, if you want to," she said, "where have you been?"

"Did you hear my conversation with Dr. Raymond the other night?"

"A little of it. I was too stunned to comprehend it all."

"Jeanne, you were splendid," he cried. "It was fine—simply fine—to do what you did!"

"Fiddlesticks!"

"It was just fine—only of course I should have expected that sort of thing from you."

"At the time," she explained, "it appealed to me as rather a lark. I love to make the old ladies here gasp. I'm quite contemptuous of conventions sometimes."

"You have my sympathy," he smiled.

"But you haven't answered my first question," she returned. "Perhaps you meant to evade it."

"Not exactly. Still, I'm afraid it would not be very—edifying."

"Be as frank as you choose," she said with a trace of asperity. "I don't mean to pry. But perhaps you owe something to yourself?"

"Jeanne," said Ted earnestly, "I owe it to myself to tell you everything, to go right down to the very bottom of my consciousness and of my conscience, and—well, it's a debt I haven't the courage to pay. Moreover, you would find that the settlement would be largely at your expense."

"You don't expect me to understand that cryptic remark, I suppose?"

"No. That's what makes it hard. I won't lie to you, and so to a certain extent I must keep my own counsel."

"Oh, dear!" said Jeanne. "What am I to make of you? Why didn't you come earlier? I would have taken you motoring. The country's beautiful and the roads nearly dried up again."

Now, here were two souls puzzlingly at odds.

Gessler was struggling to be frank and honest, to keep desperately the few remaining shreds of his self-respect, and to hold intact the entirety of her respect for him. All the love for her that he had tried to smother in a thousand ways, reputable and otherwise, returned upon him.

He knew that he was now a man with standards of conduct and decency, clean, honest, refined by the fires of a tremendous conflict. And yet the very means of his rehabilitation rose as an insurmountable barrier—a social wall of invulnerable height and thickness—between Jeanne Flood and himself.

He could, if he dared, tell her the somber story of his fall and the hardly less somber account of the long, struggling ascent from the pit?

But to what purpose? To the end that she might send him about his business, slinking and ashamed of the ladder he had climbed, of the friends he had gained in the climbing—yes, upon whose sturdy backs he had set his aspiring foot?

It was unthinkable.

On her part Jeanne trembled when she realized that the impossible had come to pass. The one poignant wish of her life—the wish that, in its inception, she had despaired of fulfilling, seemed almost at her fingers' ends!

"Ah," she had cried out in the solitude of her brother's house, "what wouldn't I give, what *wouldn't* I give for that chance again?"

And now, sitting face to face with the opportunity she had so fiercely desired, she wondered how to make it serve her. This reticence on Gessler's part, which she felt bound in all delicacy to respect, baffled and confused her.

Truly the occasion called for all her tact, all her adroitness, all the finesse at her command, or—how could she know?—the chance would slip away forever.

"To tell you the truth," said Gessler, "I mustn't go motoring with you. You've got to vouch for me to your friends—and you can't."

"Yes, I can—I will."

"No, it wouldn't do. I'm a stranger to you. You know nothing of me, because I won't tell you. And if I did tell you, you'd be no better off."

"Is it so dreadful as all that?" she cried.

"Well, maybe not—but it's—utterly and impossibly un—unconventional."

"And you know how much I care for convention," she said.

"More than you think, perhaps."

"But wasn't it dreadfully unconventional for me to drive off in the dark last night with two men?"

"On an errand of mercy? No. But how did it strike you to find Theodore Gessler living in a lakeside cottage as the protector of—"

"She didn't strike me as—" She stopped aghast. Her hand went up to her face in a gesture of protest, half of defense, as if the man had struck her.

"Oh," she cried, "oh, don't, Ted, don't!"

"Forgive me," said Gessler, all penitence. "I said it only to show you how innocently you talk when you speak of convention. Oh, Jeanne, I've got to tell you some things, some things about myself, because I must have your sympathy and your friendship. I'm running a certain risk—but it's a chance I must take."

She looked her gratitude without speaking. Somehow, it gave him a savage satisfaction to see her so shaken.

"First," he began, "I wish you would tell me what Raymond said after you left the cottage."

"He said he'd never seen such a rotten

night, and if it hadn't been for me he'd have stuck in the hotel and let 'that poor young one,' as he called her, die."

"Oh, no, he wouldn't," said Gessler grimly. "He'd have gone along if I'd had to carry him on my back."

"You look as if you could, I'm sure."

"But what did he say about me?"

"Hardly a word, except that you were a fine-looking chap and had an interesting face. He asked if I knew you and—"

"You what?"

"I lied. I said I didn't know you from Adam. Somehow I felt you didn't want to be discussed."

"Thank Heaven!" said Gessler.

"And me?"

"Oh, a million times! Now listen."

Jeanne leaned forward, chin on cupped hands, her brown, boyishly beautiful face alive with interest."

"Well?" she said disconcertingly near him.

"You'll have to sit up straight," warned Gessler, "or I'll tell you more than I mean to—just now, anyhow."

"That woman," he began, "the mother of little Katie, is one of the best friends, the dearest friends, I have. She is solid gold, every ounce of her—and that is some gold, I give you my word!"

Jeanne nodded, but made no comment.

"I am confessing now that there is no man living who has been more down-and-out than I have been. Just how and why I won't explain. But you know I lost all my money, don't you."

"I heard so."

"I made an honest effort to redeem myself during the month that immediately followed my last interview with you—you haven't forgotten it?"

She shook her head, wincing a little.

"I'm going to be frank as far as I go," he continued. "I thought if I stopped drinking I'd have a chance with—with you. You knew how I felt. I went as straight as a plumb-line for a month. Then the blow fell. I found that by a foolish action when I wasn't myself I had lost every dollar I owned."

"Men have lost more and survived," Jeanne said soberly.

"*I* lost more," said Gessler. "I don't know that the money loss would have sent me off, but the other thing did. I lost confidence in the reliability of human friendship and loyalty and honor."

"Please don't say that!"

"It's the truth. I discovered that drink had conspired with a man who called himself my friend to cheat me out of everything I had. It was ruthless, contemptible, the worst sort of treachery.

"So I suppose I said to myself—subconsciously, anyhow—I said: 'Old Booze, you have begun a fine job; go ahead and finish it!' And it pretty nearly did, just as it has done for lots better men than I. Did you ever hear of Fleischmann's breadline?"

"You mean where the poor go at night for coffee and bread?"

"Yes, at Broadway and Eleventh Street. I have stood and shivered in that line, Jeanne, and walked up with the other outcasts to get my hand-out, when it was all the nourishment I could get in twenty-four hours; and that not once, but many times."

"Oh, Ted, Ted, how *can* you tell me such things?" she cried. The beautiful, brown eyes filled with tears of compassion. "I can't stand having you say you did that. And I might have—"

"No, you mightn't. You, I want to assure you, weren't just then a factor in the situation. I was trying to forget you—but I couldn't, Jeanne, I couldn't."

He stopped, unable to go on for a moment, painfully yet deliciously affected by the contemplation of his own wo and that of this lovely and sympathetic confidante.

"I told you it would be a hard yarn to hear," he said. "Well, I'm coming to the cheerfuller part now. When I was about as low as I could get—when I felt that I had actually touched bottom I met Rocks Tracy."

"Rocks Tracy?"

"The husband of the woman to whose assistance you went so bravely the other night, and the father of little Katie. Rocks and his wife and Katie—yes, I want her to have her share of the credit—those three took the sorry remnant of a man that I was and set me on my feet.

"They made me something—you can call it a man if you like—when I hadn't a friend on earth, a penny in my pocket, or even a place where I could crawl in at night and sleep.

"Now, Rocks and Mrs. Rocks are humble, common people—the kind that my friends of other days wouldn't wipe their feet on. Except as servants, perhaps, they

would not be allowed to cross what you and I term a respectable threshold above Fourteenth Street.

"To them I'm Terry—not Teddy—their Terry; a waif whom they've adopted and, in their rough, uncouth way, loved back to life and the capacity to love in return. Mrs. Rocks is 'momma' to me, and to little Katie I'm 'Uncle Terry.'

"They know all about me—what I am and what I am not. They took hold of me when any one of my old friends would have only touched me to push me into the gutter—and that's virtually what my old friends did.

"So that's why I live with the Tracys. That accounts for me staying in the little cottage down by the lake with momma and Katie, while Rocks is back home in Brooklyn and New York, trying to make a dollar for me and another for himself—or, rather, for Mrs. Rocks and the baby. That's why I dug my way through the woods to the hotel the other night when I thought Katie was dying.

"That's why I would have grabbed Raymond by his scraggly, aristocratic little neck and yanked him back through the mud if I couldn't have got him any other way.

"And that's why I would give up anything in life before I would sever my friendship for those people; and why, if it would help them one straw's weight, I would cheerfully go and jump into the deepest ocean that ever flowed, and when I went down for the third and last time say to myself: 'Well, Gessler, you've done something worthy of yourself once in your life, anyhow.'"

The vehemence of his narration brought a high color to Gessler's face. His eyes flashed, his breath sang deep in his great lungs. He rose when he had finished, drew a heavy sigh, and passed his hand a little tremulously across his eyes.

Jeanne Flood looked up at him, quite speechless.

It was very difficult to conserve her self-control, and she made little furtive dabs at her eyes with a ball of a handkerchief. Then she too arose.

She came up to him and laid a small hand on his sleeve.

"Oh, Teddy, Teddy," she said blindly. "Now I *know* the man in you—the man I have—have loved—always, always!"

He turned and stretched out his hands to her. But she had not dared to stay, and he was alone there in the little decorated padded cell of the Callayoga Inn.

CHAPTER X.

Flood Takes a Hand.

"ROCKS," said Anselm Flood, while sitting on a bench in Stagg's Gymnasium, "where'd you get this Terrible Terry of yours, anyhow?"

Tracy had given him less than a half dozen lessons, but already the effect of brisk exercise and its accompanying regimen of restricted diet and cold baths had begun to show good effects.

Up to this point the novelty had held Flood's interest. He had been able, by a considerable effort of will, to cut down his allotment of stimulant to what seemed to him an astringent minimum—four drinks each twenty-four hours.

Tracy feared that if he attempted too abruptly to make Flood a teetotaler the latter would drink anyhow and then lie about it.

To estimate the horse-power of Tracy's self-control in handling Flood is beyond the scope of moral engineering. There were times when Rocks looked at his fat pupil with a loathing akin to nausea.

Flood's intolerable conceit, his narrow-eyed selfishness, his grossness of mind, offended the pugilist more than the frank, accustomed crudities of his own kind.

Perhaps vulgarities and brutishness were parts of a man's birthright along with the right to "colonize," to vote half a dozen times, or to blackjack inebriated citizens in dark alleys—if one were that sort of man.

But in Flood, the up-town swell, with his daily change of shirt, his innumerable harmonies of tie, his polished jowl, his white, cared-for hands, they were sickening. He had no excuse of birth, no plausible default of training to mitigate his sordidness of soul.

To Rocks Tracy, Flood's attitude was an offense, even when the stout man believed most sincerely that he was *en rapport* with his teacher. He assumed that Rocks must be a coarse, obscene fellow—a low bruiser without standards of decency or ideals above those satisfied by the mauling of a fellow creature, the acquisition of money for purposes of debauchery,

or the opportunity to frame and carry through a dirty deal.

It surprised him to learn that Rocks had never tasted whisky in his life, and it was incredible that the man's abstinence was chargeable to self-respect. It amazed him still more to hear Rocks speak affectionately of his wife and baby, and to find that he was from preference a faithful husband.

Tracy knew that among Flood's associates in business, in the clubs, and in the homes of the New York above Fourteenth Street there were many good, clean, honest men whom Flood respected for convention's sake, if not out of sympathy.

To have Flood display his own abomination of character to convince Rocks that it furnished a point of contact between the two infuriated him.

Rocks could long ago have put an end to his unpalatable association with Flood in one of several ways. The simplest of these would have been to decline further dealings with him. The one he was most tempted to adopt was a stiff punch to the jaw or the solar plexus, from which Flood would recover with the conviction that, after all, golf was better suited to his temperament.

But to what purpose? thought Rocks. There would be no satisfaction in thrashing Flood without Flood's knowing the specific infamy for which the punishment was administered. Plenty of reasons forbade Tracy's telling him; chief of which was Terry Mack's confidence.

To induce his protége to unveil his past had been no small task for Rocks and his wife. Really, they had not tried to pry, they had only wondered and innocently speculated upon the whys and wherefores of this, that, and the other indication.

Of course it was easy to see that Terry was a gentleman, that he had been reared without any idea of self-support, and that idleness and lack of purpose had been the contributing causes of his downfall.

They had tactfully refrained from personal questions, but their almost childish curiosity about the manners and deeds of the world up-town found expression in desire to know if it could be true "what the Sunday papers said about them crazy doin's of sussiety; and that them rich dames kept their reel jew'ls in a bank and wore phony ones. And," shrewdly, "wasn't Mrs. Van Osterbilt's int'rest in workin' girls and women votin' just to get her name in the papers?"

The truth came out gradually. But as Terry's liking for the Tracys grew, he took them more and more into his confidence, until once when he felt particularly miserable and depressed, when the human longing for intimacy gripped him more powerfully than his fast diminishing craving for liquor, he blurted out the whole story, holding back only the name of the man who had betrayed the trust of his friendship.

Rocks learned Flood's identity in an odd way.

"Me an' you," he said one day, "have got quite a little wad in the bank, Terry boy. I hear they's ways of gettin' a lot more interest on a guy's coin than leavin' it to gather mold in the Inst'ution for Savin's. Here's a ad, now, in the *Evenin' Trumpet,* that says you can double your money if you invest it in some kind o' minin' stock—Cobalt-Cyanide Exploration & Devel'pment Co. It reads good, cussed good. What say we shove a few hundred into that, eh?"

Terry extended his hand for the paper and ran his eye along the enticingly worded lines. But at the bottom he read:

> All applications for stock should be made by letter or wire to A. P. Flood & Co., Fiscal Agents, 813 Triffin Building.

He crumpled the paper in his hands and threw it down.

"Good Heavens, Rocks!" he said bitterly. "Not on your life! That's the man who skinned me!"

Afterward he had regretted his haste. He had been startled out of all caution. The name Flood staring at him from the page was a challenge—a slow-match touched upon the train of his stored-up resentment.

He would have burst into a torrent of denunciation, pouring out the vials of his hate, but something checked him. Flood was Jeanne's brother, and in his revelations to the Tracys he had carefully omitted reference to her.

Anselm Flood was good to Jeanne, he knew, and to the invalid mother. To abuse the name of Flood, Jeanne's name as well as Anselm's, was unthinkable.

"They're all skins, those mining fellows, I guess," Terry said. "Sometimes

they don't even have a hole in the ground. The government has shut a lot of them up, but some adroit cuss is always trying a new one—a new frame-up that he thinks will get around the law.

"Sooner or later they get 'em, though, unless they *are* straight; and for every straight one there are fifty crooked schemes.

"The trouble is, you can't tell the good from the bad. The safest way is to keep away from them all; let the little old bundle rest where it is, Rocks. Four per cent isn't so bad—if it's on a big enough principal. And our principal seems to grow a little all the time. We work for it too hard to hand it over to those chaps."

Rocks had never been able to understand the inwards of Terry's apparent lack of resentment toward Flood, when fortuitous events threw him in their path. The young man had protested against having anything to do with him. He didn't care, he said. Let Flood slide—he wouldn't soil his hands by contact with him.

"Well, you don't have to 'contract' wit' him if you don't want to. I'll do that," said Rocks. "I promise not to beat him up, kid, honest I won't. But I just gotta cast me lamps on him once."

So he had gone to see the broker, and quite without Terry's approval had "contracted" with him for a series of boxing lessons and a stiff course of training designed to reduce Flood's weight and quicken his dulling, reluctant organs. He charged him exorbitant prices, and insisted upon frequent, regular settlement in cash. He even refused to take Flood's check each week.

On his part the broker stood Rock's extortion for several reasons. His vanity was quickened by the ability to say that he was being conditioned by the trainer of the redoubtable Silent Terry Mack, a present and fast-rising star of the squared circle.

At the club in the evening he would square off and pester some indolent, inoffensive member with graphic, personally applied illustrations of a new blow taught him by Tracy. He assured the member solemnly that the particular hook or uppercut of his demonstration was used freely by the Silent One—in fact, by this blow he wore down his opponent and prepared him for the culminating "sleep punch" of the match.

Flood's mouth was always filled with the patois of the fighting game. He became a judge of "likely boys" and wisely selected those unfortunates who were "on the skids."

He even obtruded the news of the prize-ring upon the protesting Jeanne at the breakfast-table, paying little attention to her expressions of disgust, and arguing persistently that fighting was the greatest of all sports, baseball not excepted.

"And look at *me*," he would say, flexing his biceps. "Don't I improve? Haven't I got a good color? Do I look as fat as I did? Any one would think, sis, that after you'd hounded me to do something to get myself into good physical shape and saw the results you'd have some favorable notion of the means I did it by, instead of just knocking."

"That's the one redeeming feature of the whole thing," she admitted. "You are looking much, much better, dear—better than you have in years. And if this creature Macey—Lacey—"

"Tracy, I've told you a thousand times—Tracy."

"Can really help you I suppose I mustn't mind who he is. No doubt he's a—a—beast, though. It seems too bad you couldn't have looked around and found some more—er—"

"Some kindergartner, I suppose you mean. Well, Tracy's pretty raw, pretty raw. He'd hardly shine in a drawing-room, of course. But I know how to handle him, you see. I know how to deal with him.

"You can't be too superior with those chaps, and get the best out of them."

Yet Jeanne had not been annoyed very long by her brother's enthusiasm for physical culture *via* the "manly art," since, early in the season, at Dr. Felkner's earnest solicitation, the invalid mother had consented to be moved, very tenderly, to the Callayoga Inn by her daughter and a competent nurse, while Jeanne's chauffeur followed with the motor.

There was another reason why Anselm Flood submitted to Rocks Tracy's tender mercies and willingly paid his abominable fees. He wanted to get into the fight game on the business end. He had heard that there was money in it—legitimate or otherwise, he didn't care which. He continually questioned Tracy about Silent Terry Mack.

Who was he? What kind of a chap was he? Was he square? Was he "on the make"? Was he a sport? Did he drink? Where was he now? Was he going to meet Jensen, the Smiling Swede? In the fall? Why not sooner?

"Where'd you get this Terrible Terry of yours, anyhow?" he demanded again and again.

Tracy kept Flood purposely in the dark, dropping now and then only a stray bit of information to whet the man's curiosity. Rocks knew what Flood was driving at.

"I suppose you've got him in training somewhere," said Flood. "You're not handling this thing right. I guess you're shy capital—it must be pretty expensive to do the thing properly. Can't you swing it, Rocks?"

"You ain't noticed nothin' wobbly about my genius for finance, have you?" asked the boxer. "I know what I'm doin'."

"Well, you ought to have more publicity. Your man ought to have a regular training camp, so people could motor out and see him work. That's great advertising. If you get this match on with Jensen, you'll see him splurge some."

"Not unless he gets hold of the coin, you won't," said Tracy scornfully. "He's drank up and treated away his whole wad. I guess he can get backin', all right. But backin' comes high, and splits the receipts too many ways.

"Say, git that foot back, will you? An' don't keep duckin' your bean. How can you watch your man wit' your nut down all the time? It's a cinch he can uppercut you twice a second.

"Look? Like that!"

He illustrated, not too forcibly. Flood grunted and waved his arms awkwardly.

He had no breath for further discussion at just this time. But when he had been rubbed down, had bathed, and dressed, his crookedly adroit mind, quickened by the renewal of his nerve-force, began to reach out and grasp and digest ideas.

Tracy had unwittingly suggested something.

Jensen, the Swedish champion, with whom Tracy was working for a match with his "boy" was broke. He needed backing. Evidently Tracy would prove obdurate in the matter of accepting financial assistance from him, with a view to more sensational exploitation of Terry.

Tracy, he had discovered, was an old fox, a tightwad. He never "loosened up" with the boys, but thriftily banked his money.

Flood began to be convinced that Tracy was well fixed, and that, no matter how willing he, Flood, might be to extend assistance, Tracy actually did not need it.

Very well, then, there was more than one way to remove a feline pelt. Flood got into touch with Jensen, and offered to back him, to furnish money for training-camp expenses, publicity, and the amount of the forfeit that must be posted to bind the articles of agreement for the match.

Jensen showed a suitable hesitation. He said he would prefer the assistance of his own associates, men who had gone along with him in his career heretofore, who had stood by him, and to whom, he said, he owed the obligation of loyalty.

Flood did not know that Jensen had not an ounce of loyalty in his big, pink-satin body. To Jensen, Flood came as a welcome angel; for his previous backers were making severe terms with him.

His habits were against him, and they knew that his days were numbered as champion. They were afraid of the new battler, of whom they knew but little, and that little to the effect that he was known to be a poor mixer, a careful liver, and, more than all, a "demon in the ring."

Flood knew, however, that an acknowledged champion could make hard terms; that he could demand a big bonus in the shape of a heavy proportion of the "gate," and impose stringent conditions in the matter of weights and rules.

"Ay don' know, Mr. Flode," said Jensen. "Ay don' tenk you understand not'ing about dis har game. Ay see what my manager, Bill Wallace, say. Ay tenk it over."

"Well, Jensen," said Flood, "I'll do it handsomely. I'll give you the means to hire the best training talent there is."

"You hire me dat Rocks Tracy?" asked Jensen slyly.

"Well, hardly," said Flood, with a grin. "But I'll tell you something. I stand in about right with Tracy. He'll do about anything I say. You keep my name out of it, and I'll promise you something no one else can get for you—and that's a winning fight."

"No!" cried the pugilist, startled.

"Sure thing," wheedled Flood.

"Ay don't believing you. Dat faller is square; everybody says so."

"Don't kid yourself, Jensen. He's the worst tightwad in the business, isn't he?"

"Ya, I bet you he is."

"Money'll go a long way with that chap," went on Flood. "I see him three or four times a week—take boxing lessons from him. We're as close as—as brothers."

"Then what for you ain't backing his boy, then?"

"Never you mind why. I could if I wanted to. I'd rather back you. If I back you, you'll win."

Jensen went away much elated. He knew a dozen ways to make Flood's money trickle into his pocket during a long period of training.

Being assured of substantial backing, he became cocksure, and Tracy began to find stumbling blocks in the way of favorable negotiations:

He wrote Terry:

> I don't know what's got into that cussed Jensen. I thought he was busted, but now he's away up out o' sight. He's found some one some place that will back him all right and he wants to pull your weight down five pounds at the ringside, shoves up the ante on the forfeit, and says he'll have to have a fifty-fifty split of the gate, win or lose.
>
> There's some monkey in the woodpile kid, sures youre knee high to a godse. How's momma and Katie? Keep me posted. Momma always did hate to write letters.

CHAPTER XI.

A Visit to Momma.

JEANNE FLOOD'S feminine curiosity gave her a great deal of trouble.

Teddy Gessler had told her a story startling enough as it stood. She told herself that she must respect the man's desire to defer whatever additional revelations he chose to make concerning himself, and studiously avoided questioning him, hoping that as the days passed he would decide to complete the history of which she felt the salient part remained still untold.

But these Tracys, these common folk of an alien world, these extraordinary people who were capable by an act of simple, spontaneous kindness, of inspiring so magnificent a loyalty; who and what were they?

She loved Gessler. Consequently she could not understand that there could be any reason why everybody should not be friendly and kind to him.

The picture of his once pitiable condition was not, to her, a very vivid one. To conceive of Gessler as anything except winningly attractive was impossible.

Even when he had been drinking more than was good for him, he had never lacked the deferential manner, the innate charm of his real character. She felt that she had always recognized the inner self behind that careless, irresponsible boyishness which had led him into excesses.

She remembered how she had defended and excused him to Anselm, that morning at breakfast, and was glad. Now he would justify, *had* justified her!

But the Tracy's; who were they? The name had a sort of familiarity.

True, it was not an uncommon one. Probably she had heard it many times, had very likely met a Tracy or two. She had met so many people. She believed herself quite cosmopolitan—quite democratic.

Anyhow, she would go down and see Mrs. Tracy, and inquire about little Katie, and take the child some sweets.

She found Mrs. Tracy exceedingly ordinary—an uneducated, good-hearted soul, with a humorous twinkle in her blue eyes, and a motherly way with everybody.

Little Katie was sweet and clean and quaint—quite an average youngster, whose fingers got sticky when involved in the toils of a wet gumdrop, just as did those of the children of the well-to-do with whom Jeanne was pleasantly acquainted.

Jeanne was fond of believing that she was unconventional and very broad-minded. She was not in the least perturbed or ashamed of her spontaneously declared love for Teddy Gessler.

He had loved her for many years, as she well knew. Now he had apparently made good. He certainly looked good.

Whatever it was that he was keeping back, she did not doubt his fine integrity. If he had a good reason for withholding something, she was confident that there was no occasion for shame in it.

She loved him so fully that she trusted him to the *nth* power. In his future she had abundant confidence.

He would make good absolutely; now that he had taken a firm hold upon the manhood that was his, it was only a ques-

tion of time when he would emerge from all this tangle of mystery with some sort of triumph etched upon his shield; and it would be a triumph the pride of which she could share with him.

She was glad she had given him unequivocally to understand that she loved this new, this real Theodore Gessler. Perhaps that was the thing needed to prompt him to tell her the rest of that fascinating, tantalizing story of his.

She even suspected that had she stayed in the little reception-room a few minutes longer he might have told it then.

She was very happy, and very sure of his love, even if, in her confusion of self-revelation, she had bolted off to her room, tremulous, almost hysterical with the joy of her own bold declaration.

But then it would have been a return to the conventions to remain and allow him to take her in his arms and kiss her, and rave about his love for her—and, perhaps, be caught by some spying piazza-cat, avid for just such developments.

Of course—it would have been very nice—all except the being caught part.

She had hoped that Ted would be about the Tracy cottage that afternoon; but Mrs. Rocks said he was away, she didn't just rightly know where.

"It was splendid of him to come to the hotel for the doctor, wasn't it!" Jeanne said.

"Splendid?" repeated Mrs. Rocks. "Yes, I s'pose it was. But if he hadn't o' done it, he wouldn't been Terry."

"Teddy—oh, yes, you do call him Terry, don't you? It sounds odd. I've always known him as Ted—that's short for Theodore, you know."

"Then you've known him a long time, Miss Flood?"

"Since we were children. He was one of my—one of my brother's dearest friends."

"Was he so?" asked Mrs. Rocks, lifting an eyebrow. There was an odd suggestion in that lifted eyebrow—almost of sarcasm.

"Hasn't Mr. Gessler ever told you about my brother?" Jeanne asked. "I think Ted had no closer friend than he."

"Well, to tell the truth," said Mrs. Rocks, keeping the recalcitrant eyebrow in leash, "he hasn't never said much about his old friends. I've heard him mention Mr. Flood—but not much. I don't know how much he's told you about himself—but maybe you've heard that some of his friends didn't treat him just like you'd expect real friends to treat a party."

Jeanne felt a little uncomfortable. In spite of herself, she included her own name among those of Gessler's recreant friends—she even suspected that she had been the most remiss of all.

"Mr. Gessler has told me some very interesting things," she said. "And I'm sure you'd be pleased if you knew all the beautiful compliments he has paid your husband and you, Mrs. Tracy. He has told me how wonderful you were—and how dear you are to him. It is fine, such loyalty as yours—and his, too.

"It is so unfortunate, the way he feels about his old friends. I wish he had only given us a chance, Mrs. Tracy. I am sure that I, for one, would have stood by him in his trouble."

"Yes," said Mrs. Rocks, her blue eyes full of a sincere kindliness, "I am sure you would—as sure as I can be. I tell you, Miss Flood, it was awful pitiful, the way he felt."

"And my brother, too," went on Jeanne; "I wish Ted—Mr. Gessler had come to us in his trouble; Mr. Flood would have given anything he possessed to help him."

Now, Jeanne did not quite believe this. She could not help remembering Anselm's rather heartless comments at the breakfast-table—so unkind, in fact, that she had been forced in spite of herself to defend Gessler.

But at the same time, being in love with Gessler, and by the same token in love with all the world, she told herself stalwartly, in loyalty to Anselm as well as to Gessler, that Flood had not meant his comment just as it had been made—that he did not realize how harsh it sounded.

"Katie," called Mrs. Tracy. "Katie! Don't run away, dear, when Miss Flood came down here just a purpose to see you. You never would know, Miss Flood, that she'd ever had that ill turn. The doctor thinks she must have ate something."

"He said so," agreed Jeanne. "Don't call her in. Little folks are so busy, aren't they? I guess they take their affairs as seriously as we grown-ups, don't you think so?"

"Seriouser," said Mrs. Rocks. "Oh, now, you mustn't be goin' so soon! I want to make you a cup of tea.

"Maybe Terry 'll be home—you ain't

seen him since that night, have you?—oh, sure you have. Wasn't you just tellin' me! Ain't I thick!

"Do you like sugar and milk in it? Sugar? An' a slice o' lemon? Terry was tellin' me some of his old friends prefers it that way.

"Now, me, I like it plain and strong. Puttin' in them other things takes away from the taste o' the tea. Have a cake—they ain't very good, are they? Too bad, but my oven just acted *up* this mornin'."

When the sputter of Jeanne's car had diminished to a mere echo, Terry Mack pushed aside the curtain at the door of his room.

"Come on out, boy, she's gone," said Mrs. Rocks. "Did I do all right?"

"Fine, momma. It was a shame to make you."

"Well, she near had me up a tree when she got to talkin' about that brother of hers. I like to busted. Oh, Terry, ain't she just the loveliest thing? If I thought my Katie would grow up as pretty as that I'd—I'd worry myself to death, I guess. Poor folks got no right havin' pretty kids—the homely ones is safer."

"We're not going to be so poor," said Terry, sitting down and lighting a cigarette thoughtfully.

"Oh, *we* ain't, ain't we?" demanded momma. "Who's we, anyhow?"

"Why," began the young man, embarrassed and halting, "you and Rocks and Katie and—"

"Stop right there, young man," said Mrs. Rocks. "Ain't you got sense enough to see that you can't go on bein' a part of the Tracy family much longer?"

"No, I don't see it at all," he said doggedly.

But he was opposing his own reason as well as Mrs. Rocks's dictum. It surprised him no little to hear her declare it.

"Terry, boy," said the woman, pain and fondness shining together in her fine eyes, "Terry, boy, don't fool yourself. That girl is just noodly about you."

"Oh, no!"

"You know better, you scamp. Maybe she ain't told you; but she would, if you gave her a chance."

Terry said nothing.

"And it's plain to me that you're just as crazy about her."

"Well, as you put it up to me, momma, I'll admit that. But—"

"But she wouldn't marry no prize-fighter," supplied Mrs. Tracy bluntly.

"Then, as I'm a prize-fighter, she won't marry me; so that's settled," he said, trying to speak a little flippantly, and making a pitiful failure.

"Terry dear," said momma, "do you think my Rocks and me don't understand that we ain't your kind of folks? We love you, and we think—we know you love us; and we done our best by you. But nature is nature, and blood is blood—and blood is thicker 'n water."

"Mine is," cried Terry. "And because it is, I'm going to stick to you folks. If I have a drop of red blood in me, I can't do anything else!"

"What talk, what talk!" she said. "How you goin' to marry that girl, then?"

"I'm not!"

"Oh, yes you are. If you don't, her heart 'll be broke."

"It will be broken anyhow when she finds out I'm a pugilist. Forgive me, momma, I'd no right to say that."

"It's the truth," she cried. "Why shouldn't you say it? I know. Prize-fightin's all right for such as us! But not for you, boy. It's been a good steppin' stone—that's all."

Terry sighed, arose, and did something he had never done before since he had known the Tracys. He went over to Mrs. Rocks and kissed her.

"You're an old darling," he said. "Don't think for a minute that I'll ever go back on Rocks and you."

"Oh," said momma with asperity. "I ain't so old. What do you take me for, you young sprout?" But she smiled slyly and patted Terry on the shoulder.

"Go on now and give it a think," she said. "Nobody's goin' to steer you none. You've got two to think of, and it's up to you, boy. You got to use common sense—if a young one in love has got any common sense. I wish we'd get another letter from Rocks. He hates to write letteers."

Terry went down by the shore and sat on a big, flat-topped stone, and looked off across the blue, shimmering surface of Callayoga Lake.

It was gratuitous advice that counseled him to think. He had been doing nothing else for days. To go up to the Inn and see Jeanne, and talk to her, and love her, was the great longing in his heart; and yet he didn't dare.

He owed so much to the Tracys. Even now poor Rocks was down in the hot city, working desperately with the stubborn, egotistical champ, Jensen, to get a fair deal for the coming battle. Some one had stepped in and upset Tracy's apple-cart, just when things had been going well.

Now he'd have to accept harder terms, and Terry would have to fight his own head off or the best they could get would be little enough.

He began to hate Jensen cordially; and he had never before hated an opponent. That boxer was going to get the licking of his life—and yet, was he? Would the fight take place at all?

Common sense, of which Mrs. Rocks had spoken so sapiently, told Terry that it was only a question of time before Jeanne learned what his profession really was.

Maybe she would not know until after this fight—but here was an encounter so bristling with publicity that he could not hope to maintain his incognito afterward, no matter what the outcome.

Heretofore he had been an unknown, to whom the newspapers gave only passing notice. But the very circumstance of his meeting the great unbeaten Jensen in a championship match assured an avalanche of publicity, whether he won or lost.

He almost hoped he might lose, if it came to that. Then he should say to Jeanne:

"You see, I lost. I was not born a prize-fighter. It is not my *métier;* I am a gentleman, not a pugilist. While I do well in small affairs, I am not brute enough, not coarse enough, for a real battle."

It would be a kind of earnest of his gentility to lose.

But how about his friends, the Tracys? Once let his name be entered in the lists, and Rocks would back him with every dollar they had accumulated.

Not only would the expenses of his training have to be borne, but Rocks would see that all that remained went down in wagers at the quoted odds.

Rocks had the most absolute, serene confidence in Terry. He simply *knew* that his "boy" could "beat the head off" any other fighter of his weight, even the big fellows.

His confidence was of that unbounded sort that wins battles before they are fought, sells Yankee goods in every market in the world, wins Nobel peace prizes, and makes American stage folk captivate London audiences.

Terry must go on, and he must win. If Jeanne's heart were broken—well, it would have to break, and his own would break, too.

For now that he knew that Jeanne loved him, there was something bitter-sweet in the thought that her heart would break.

For Terry to refuse battle meant humiliation to Tracy. It meant money loss, a return to poverty, and perhaps the necessity of Rocks's again returning to the ring, where his age would surely count against him, and his downfall be but a matter of months. For Terry to lose meant humiliation, too, but it would not involve financial ruin; and there would be a chance that he might "come back."

But even losing, Tracy would give him credit for doing his best. And he *would* do his best!

But Gessler must see Jeanne, and see her soon. He did not know what he was going to say to her. He only knew that his self-control would be put to the ultimate test.

He must not take her in his arms and repeat the protestations of love which would now be so sweet to her because she had surrendered, voluntarily, to him. He must dodge, equivocate, perhaps lie—keep her in the dark as long as possible.

No, perhaps it would be best to tell her the whole truth now—and thus escape the consequence — escape having her realize later that he had deceived her. And then she would beg him, for the sake of their love, to give up the ring—to go West and make good as a ranchman, or as a salesman—anything, rather than fight this fight and cause the world to resound with the name of Gessler as a cheap pugilist.

And he would be hard put to it to deny her—that was sure. He would have to hold up in his mind's eye the picture of Rocks and Mrs. Rocks and little Katie relying upon him and looking to him for victory.

Oh yes, he could promise himself to quit the game when this one fight was history; and it would be forever too late. The irreparable mischief would have been done.

What was the use of quitting, then? If he fought this fight, win or lose he felt that he would always remain a pugilist,

fighting on and on until old age wore him down and a younger man sent him to his knees in defeat.

But that would be of no consequence compared to the other great thing which he should have lost—the love of this aristocratic, high-headed, high-minded girl.

"Come into the house, Terry boy," called a full, rich voice. "We got griddle-cakes and real maple syrup!"

And Terry arose and went sadly up the path.

CHAPTER XII.

The Bald Truth.

THE beautiful Miss Jeanne Flood, as fresh and rosy as the June morning itself stepped out upon the wide veranda of the Callayoga Inn and looked wistfully off across the lake, which lay smiling at the foot of the long hill.

A week had passed since Gessler's call at the hotel, and it had been three days since her visit to the Tracy cottage. She confessed to herself her disappointment at not seeing the young man that afternoon, and now she was puzzled because he failed to seek her.

In the belief that he was likely almost any time to put in his appearance, she daily omitted her customary motor trip about the countryside.

Masculine society was, as might be expected, at a premium here. There was an influx of men on Fridays and Saturdays for brief week-end visits—men of all ages, but practically every one of them attached.

They were the husbands, fathers, and brothers of the feminine guests; or, if they were not, they were promptly preempted upon arrival by various young women whose week-days were more restful than exciting.

About Jeanne people were prone to remark a sort of aloofness, a not very tangible but yet nearly always present reserve, though everybody liked her exceedingly.

She could always have full measure of masculine attention; elderly gentlemen, followed by approving nods from their wives, showed her marked courtesies; younger men made no attempt to disguise their admiration, since to do so would have been useless dissimulation; the haughtiest clerk deferred to her with Chesterfieldian grace, and the smallest bell-boy raced to her bidding for the gratuity of her smile.

She exacted a common homage from all without in the least trying to do so. If she was generous in the use of her car for the pleasure of others, her friends came to realize, nevertheless, that she liked upon frequent occasions to go for solitary drives into the deeply wooded country that lay all about.

Upon these lonely excursions the girl found what she sought, the opportunity for deep reflection, for self-study, and for the development of what might have appeared to her less independent sisters a curious individual philosophy.

Perhaps for a person of more unstable equilibrium this introspective habit would have led to morbidness. With Jeanne it resulted in a keen, analytical faculty of reasoning. She thought things out along lines approximating the accuracy of the perfect syllogism.

If she took a book, she read it sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, applying to every proposition the test of a remarkable mental chemistry. Reasoning from the known to the unknown, she learned to apply the processes of elimination and to reach conclusions satisfactory to herself, if often at variance with the unquestioning standards of her associates.

She had heard that a woman's intuition may be more reliable than a man's judgment, but convinced herself that in her case pure reason was the more dependable.

Again, the mere assertion of an alleged fact by another did not always carry weight. She refused to accept her opinions and beliefs ready-made from those who were "supposed to know."

So far as possible, she wanted to know things of her own knowledge.

One would suppose that such habits of thought would make her pedantic, skeptical, or even cynical. On the contrary, she became singularly tolerant.

Her reservations were always mental. She reasoned that behind every effect lay a cause, sometimes too deep-hidden for casual apprehension.

There were two sides to every question, and the springs of action were not always open to common inspection, like the mechanism of a French clock, or the glass-enclosed machinery of a motor chassis on exhibition.

Human impulses were complex, not sim-

ple. People did things, even sinned, from mixed motives, of whose formulas they were not always masters.

If she considered Gessler's avoidance of her peculiar, she told herself that he had a reason. Because she loved him, and believed that he loved her, she worried.

But she was not yet hurt or offended.

She admitted the possibility that the explanation, when discovered, might be painful. She was not of the fatuously optimistic type, trusting blindly that "everything would come out all right." There was plenty of evidence that made such a conclusion premature.

But she did feel very strongly that the outcome could very well rest largely with herself.

Within twenty-four hours the name "Tracy" had come back to her. Her brother had spoken of his new athletic mentor as Tracy, a rather low character, a trainer of pugilists.

She could not understand Gessler's intimacy with a person like that. She hoped that Gessler's Tracy would turn out quite a different man from her brother's Tracy.

But there was evidence that the two were one. She remembered the boxing-gloves, the chest-weights, the dumb-bells at the Tracy cottage. She remembered the decorations on the rough walls—pictures of prize-fighters, mostly, torn from the sporting pages of newspapers.

Gessler's patently fit physical condition tended to confirm this evidence. Who but an efficient handler of men could have made of the indolent ne'er-do-well she had known in the old days this lean, square-shouldered citizen, with easy stride and confident bearing?

It must have been some one of experience in the enforcement of a rigid doctrine to achieve such a result.

In spite of the apparent good results, she hated the thought of this association, sensing the possibility of some offsetting moral depreciation.

But she could wait, postponing judgment.

On this glorious, late-June morning she felt the lure of the solitudes. For some reason Gessler had kept away, and for the same reason he might continue to do so. The weather was too fine to waste moping about the hotel porches.

Besides, she wanted to think; and the aimless chatter of the piazza habitués disturbed and annoyed her. The constant obligation which she felt, to be nice and to smile at everybody, became exceedingly irksome.

So she sent to the garage for her car, kissed Mrs. Flood an affectionate good morning, and was off.

"As a chaperone," said her mother good-humoredly, "I am a distinct success, from your point of view, my dear."

She was eminently reasonable, was gentle Mrs. Flood. She and Jeanne understood each other as it is rarely given mother and daughter to do.

The elder woman had decided that the girl cared little for men, and besides, she herself was of the patient, philosophical sort. Her other daughter had grown up and married well without undue or nagging espionage.

"You know, dearest, I hate to leave you," said Jeanne a little contritely. "I guess I'll wait for your nap time."

"Pshaw!" said Mrs. Flood fondly. "Run along with you; you want to be by yourself. Besides, Mrs. Gwendell has promised to come up and play cribbage with me. She won last time, so I'm looking for my revenge; don't think of me for a minute. You see I shall be pleasantly occupied, my dear."

Jeanne adjusted her big tortoise-shell glasses, tucked her skirt under her, waved a friendly hand at her piazza acquaintances, and spun down the drive through the lodge gate in a cloud of dust.

The morning air was delicious—full of soft, summery odors, fresh distillations of a new day. People pay a dollar a drop in the effort to have such smells reproduced in the breeze from a kerchief or a bit of lace—and succeed only in obtaining palpable imitations.

Jeanne's car coasted smoothly and silently down a long slope, rounded a curve at the bottom, and just escaped upsetting a young man coming along the road.

Miss Flood set her brakes, which caught and dragged the locked wheels along in a little cloud of dust; then she turned in her seat and looked back. The young man stood and watched her, smiling.

"You didn't sound your horn," he said. "You should be pinched. Suppose I were Constable Cornshock of Callayoga Corners?"

"I'd either talk very nicely to you, or give you a dollar."

He approached the waiting car deliberately, hat in hand.

"You may try method number one," he said.

"Come and ride a little way, then," she invited. "Why haven't you been to—"

"Your tire is flat," said Gessler. "I hate to tell you, but it's the truth."

"How provoking!" she cried. "It's a brand new one."

Gessler kicked a small, jagged stone, embedded in the wheel-track a few feet to the rear.

"That's what did it," he said. "When you set your brakes and slid your wheels—see, it's torn 'way through the casing and cut your tube. The tire people will have to set a new piece in; they will charge you eight dollars."

"Oh, dear!" said Jeanne. "I'll have to change it."

She slid the car along into the grass by the roadside.

"Let's have your keys," said Gessler. He opened the tool-box on the running-board, looking for a jack.

"Whose are these?" he inquired, holding up a suit of overalls which he found folded on the top of the box.

"Mine," the girl replied. "But Armand wears them—my chauffeur. He's very fussy about his clothes. You'd better put them on, if you're going to help with the tire."

Gessler busied himself with wrench and lugs.

"It's a long time since I've messed with a job like this," he said. "I rather enjoy it. Did you ever have to change one yourself?"

"Goodness, yes! But I'd rather have help. How's Katie?"

"She's all right. Let's have that other wrench, please. Thanks. Her mother said you were down there the other day. I'm sorry I missed you."

"So you dashed right up to the hotel to tell me, as soon as you found I'd been there!"

"Don't, Jeanne," cried Gessler. "You don't understand!"

"No," she said soberly. "I'm afraid I don't. It's all very mysterious."

Gessler worked on in silence. This girl of girls had said she loved him, and he had kept away from her until this accidental meeting.

Perhaps he had been on his way to the hotel this morning—he couldn't be sure, because he had started for it several times lately, and turned off the road each time before he got there.

Now, knowing that she loved him, and with his own heart apparently turning handsprings at her nearness, his greeting had been flippant and his conversation the flat comment of the occasion.

"There," he said, releasing the jack. "It's done."

He stood brushing his soiled hands together, looking at his finished work as if it were the dominant topic in his mind.

"You have earned your ride," said Jeanne. "Come, let's be going. Armand keeps a cake of soap in the box—you can wash your hands at the next brook."

"I—I'd better not," said Gessler.

He stood looking down at the soiled and dingy overalls; then he glanced at the trim freshness of Jeanne's morning attire. There was a kind of grim significance in the contrast.

"I'd like to, but—"

"Don't be silly," said the girl. "Really, you're not as civil as you might be."

"What do I look like to you, just as I am, overalls and all?' he demanded.

"I don't dare tell you," she smiled. "It might make you conceited."

"Don't joke," he cried. "You know what I mean. What's the use of my fooling myself—and you? Girls like you can't go motoring about with honest mechanics, or plumbers, or—"

"If soiled working-clothes are a badge of inferiority—which I don't admit," said the girl, "you have only to put them back in the box. They're not yours, you know."

"They fit me pretty well—and they're more appropriate than you seem to believe. Discarding them doesn't change me, Jeanne. I'm what I am—what I have made myself—no matter what I wear. Just because I happen to look like a gentleman—"

"If you think I'm going to stand here and slap mosquitoes, and listen to your silly conundrums, please guess again. I'm going for a ride, and you're coming, too."

"Your invitation," began Gessler, "is very—"

"It isn't an invitation," she cried. "It's an order! Now, I think you are beginning to be sane."

Gessler settled back in the seat beside her, pulling the foredoor shut with a bang.

Jeanne touched the self-starter and the motor purred. Then she turned without throwing in the clutch and looked at her companion with a smile, almost, Gessler thought, of triumph. She was very close—in fact, she was leaning toward him.

"Oh, Ted," she said softly. "You used to say you loved me. And I—I *couldn't* tell you how fond of you—not in the old days. Now you have come back to me, and I—I'm a very bold, unwomanly person—but I can't let you go again, as I did before.

"I prayed—yes, really prayed—for another opportunity, when I was sure it would never come. I want to help you—though I don't know what your trouble is. Perhaps you haven't any. Perhaps you don't care for me—"

"Jeanne, Jeanne!" he cried. The need for self-control was even greater than he had dreaded.

"Whatever it is you are trying to do—whatever task you have ahead of you, whatever problem you have to solve—I'd like to help you! Tell me, Ted, isn't it a help to know I do love you?"

Gessler tried to look at the girl, and failed. He fixed his eyes on a clump of green branches that overhung the road ahead.

The tensity of his gaze, the white backs of his knuckles as he interlaced his strong fingers—these told Jeanne that a battle was being fought. She leaned a little nearer, and laid a warm palm upon his locked hands.

"Dear old Ted," she said very gently.

The man turned suddenly, great tender fires blazing in his eyes. He put up his hands and took her lovely, flushing face between them.

"Oh, Jeanne," he cried, his voice hoarse and vibrant. "How I *love* you!" He drew her toward him and kissed her, dropping his arm behind her shoulders and holding her close. She hid her face against his neck and clung to him, sobbing a little.

"Hadn't you better drive along?" he asked presently. It came to him suddenly that all this drama was being played upon an open road, where an audience might appear without warning.

"Of course," said Jeanne, sitting up suddenly. "Aren't we shocking people? Suppose some one—" She laughed. "Poor mother says she never worries about *me!*"

The car drummed gaily up the twisting hills, sped along the ridges, and dropped smoothly into cool, sweet valleys, where brooks flowed through green meadows, and cattle grazed or ruminated in lazy content.

"I love the country," said Jeanne. "Let's have a farm, Ted."

"I could buy one," he said, "a pretty good one. But what on earth would we do with it? I'm no blooming agriculturist."

"You could learn. You could do anything you tried."

"Think of the long, cold, shut-in winters," he cautioned.

"Oh, we wouldn't stay in the country winters," she said. "We'd go to town and live with Anselm. He'd be delighted—"

"Anselm!" he repeated.

The tone startled Jeanne; she looked quickly at Gessler, but already he had regained his composure.

"There's Mount Winnekeemet," he said, pointing to the distant horizon, where a pale blue cone stood above the far green forest. "It's at least eighty miles from here—it shows how clear the air is."

"Ted, dear," said Jeanne presently, "who is Tracy?"

Gessler showed no perturbation, but inwardly he seemed to shrivel.

So it was coming; he might as well face it! Jeanne now had a right to ask any question she liked. He had done the one thing that robbed him of the privilege of his own secret—he had accepted her love.

He told himself that he was a coward. Circumstances had crushed his resolution, beaten down his guard, whipped him to a finish.

He should never have run the risk of staying at Lake Callayoga, but should have gone back to New York a week ago. A letter to Jeanne would have put an end to all this chaos—a cruel method, to be sure, but merciful in the end.

"My friend Rocks?" he asked.

"Rocks!" she repeated. "Rocks!"

Yes, that was the man. The name was perfectly familiar.

"I should think you would know," said Gessler. "Haven't you ever heard your brother speak of him? Tracy's teaching him to box."

"He's a—a pugilist, isn't he?" she asked.

"He was once. Now he's an athletic instructor."

"Oh," said Jeanne. "I wondered if he could be the same man. Isn't he rather—rather—horrid?"

"Well, he's been a pugilist," said Gessler. "Pugilists are considered 'horrid,' I suppose. I've never recommended him socially, you know."

"I don't think I mind the—fighting, and all that sort of thing," went on Jeanne. "It's not my idea of sport, though. It's not sport—it's a kind of business, it seems to me."

"Heaven help us!" cried Gessler. "I've heard Rocks say that a hundred times. How did you know?"

"Why, everybody knows. It's commercial, and sordid, and—low."

"Yes," he agreed. "I guess it's all those, and then some."

"Ted, dear," said Jeanne, "this man is your friend. I'm under tremendous obligations to him. It's hard to realize that. I mustn't say anything to offend your loyalty to him, must I?"

"Why should you?" asked Gessler innocently. "Tracy's all right. He doesn't need any defending. What he is, he is.

"I'd prefer you to judge him by what he is—and by his wife and baby. You've seen them, and Rocks has heard of you, for I wrote him about what you did the other night. So you see you've canceled your obligation."

It gave Jeanne an odd sort of qualm, this idea of exchanging favors with a pugilist. What a strange world!

"There are one or two other questions that perhaps you'd like to ask," said Gessler grimly.

"About Mr. Tracy? I don't think of any more. I'm glad he's not as bad as I gathered from—Anselm."

Knowing Anselm Flood, Gessler could imagine the idea of Tracy that had been given Jeanne. Flood would rather glory in his association with a shocking person. It hurt to realize the estimate of Rocks that Jeanne had thus formed.

"No," said he, "not about Tracy—about me."

"I had made up my mind not to pry into your affairs," said the girl. "Some time, when you wish, you may tell me what you like. Of course, I've wondered how you had lived in the last year—you haven't let your friends support you, of course. And you look rather prosperous."

"I'm prosperous enough," he agreed. "I've gotten my own living, and helped him get his. You know Tracy and I are in—business together."

"Oh, I see," said Jeanne. "You're an athletic instructor, too?"

"No," said Gessler, bracing himself and gripping the padded arms of his seat. "I'm a prize-fighter."

CHAPTER XIII.

A Business Proposition.

THE New York papers announced that at last Rocks Tracy, the astute manager of Silent Terry Mack, had secured a match with Ole Jensen, the "Swedish Bear Cat."

Full particulars, more or less accurate, were given. The date of the fight, set for early fall, allowed a suitable period of training, and with a braying of trumpets Jensen made known the location of his camp.

He granted daily interviews with the sporting writers, and maintained a staff of press agents who kept the newspapers of the entire country supplied with material for endless "dope."

Even the wisest, however, were at a loss to guess the source of Jensen's apparently limitless funds. He had more sparring assistants, rubbers, and other highly ornamental attachés to lodge, feed, and salary than a reigning queen has ladies-in-waiting.

A stream of sport-laden automobiles poured along the roads leading to his camp, where he gave daily exhibitions of sparring, wrestling, skipping rope, and other exercises involved in the intricate process of his conditioning.

"I tell you, boy," said Flood in one of his frequent conferences with the Scandinavian Whirlwind (the newspapers coined a fresh name for Jensen every day), "you're getting the best line of advertising a fighter ever had. And you got what you wanted in the articles, too."

As a matter of fact, Tracy had been obliged to accept an exceedingly one-sided arrangement. In order to make any profit at all, Terry would be obliged to win.

For although in most fights even the loser has a profitable share of the gate receipts, the canny Jensen and his parasitic associates had stood out for a ruinous proportion, win or lose.

The forfeit money alone had made the

thrifty Rocks groan inwardly as he wrote out his check.

Two considerations, however, had sustained Rocks in his decision to accept the inequitable terms of the champion.

First, of course, was his unlimited, unshakable confidence in his "boy." He alone knew the splendid vitality and wonderful skill which Terry's innate physical resources and his own careful schooling had combined to develop.

Terry, as Rocks was assured, had never yet been compelled to extend himself in a contest.

Again, wise in his generation, Tracy sensed the possibilities for profit that lay in the betting odds, which the publicity given Jensen's preparation was sure to stimulate.

It was well known that the champ was badly out of condition. But as time went on the detailed accounts of his work began to tell.

The odds crept from even money to ten to nine, then to ten to eight, and again to ten to seven on Jensen.

Tracy held off, and advised his acquaintances to lie low. The apparent unwillingness, therefore, of those who were supposed to be in the trainer's confidence to take chances still further enhanced the general opinion that Terry's backers lacked faith.

Anselm Flood, for obvious reasons, continued to urge Tracy to accept financial assistance at his hands. Tracy obdurately assured him that he and Terry were amply able to take care of their own troubles.

"And I'll tell you another thing, Mr. Flood," said Rocks one afternoon, "all this advertisin' that some one's payin' for ain't doin' Jensen no good. 'Cause why? 'Cause it 'll swell his corn-colored noodle so he can't wear a number ten hat. An' moreover it pushes the odds on him so high there won't be much in the bettin', even if he wins."

Flood, whose lavish contributions of funds made this condition possible, was disturbed. The thing was being overdone; he realized that he had been a fool to allow it.

In a few days Tracy saw the announcement that Jensen had a badly sprained wrist. The odds dropped back to even money.

"He ain't got no sprained wrist," said Rocks to Flood. "Some of them guys has got wise."

All this time, while the daily performances of the Smiling Swede were spread before an eager public, nobody seemed to know anything about the silent one.

Tracy said he was "up-country," and this was true. No further information was forthcoming.

Newspaper men dogged the trainer's footsteps, private detectives followed his scent day and night. It began to be thought that Rocks had delegated the work to other hands, since no one had proof that he ever saw his protégé.

"Why the deuce don't you come out in the open?" demanded Flood. "What's the use of all this secrecy? People will begin to think you haven't got a fighter at all. With the publicity Jensen is getting, they'll forget there is such a man as Terry Mack. What are you doing—training a ghost back in the woods?'

"I should worry," remarked Tracy indifferently. "Could you let me have some money to-day, Mr. Flood?"

On certain of his occasional visits to Flood's office Tracy avoided the usual exit and slipped down a flight of obscure stairs to the basement, where his old friend Larry Corregan, the janitor, obligingly piloted him through a maze of coal-bins and cobwebby passages to a bulkhead door leading into the subcellar of an adjoining building. From this, *via* a back alley, Tracy would emerge, hop into a taxi, and hurry off to the Pennsylvania Station and a suburban express.

It was a scheme that worked to perfection and to the undoing of curious reporters and other "dope" collectors.

Rock's dislike for his opulent and once corpulent patron increased as the summer wore on. He could not understand why Flood stuck around the city through the hot weather, when others of his kind were spending as little time as possible at business.

He knew that, though the furniture of Flood's up-town house was swathed in sheeting, and shutters covered the windows, the owner spent most of his nights there. He did not know, however, that it was there that Flood held frequent conferences with Jensen's sponsors and assistants.

"What are you going to do, Rocks," asked Flood one day in the most casual way, "if your Terrible Terry gets his block knocked off?"

"He ain't goin' to," Tracy assured him.

"Oh, you never can tell. Jensen is some fighter."

"Sure; that's what everybody says. It must be so."

"It is so; he's a demon. I don't believe your man has a show on earth."

"That fight may go five rounds," said Tracy. "At the end of it Mr. Mack will be on the long end of the money."

"But supposing, just for argument's sake, that he shouldn't come through after all; what then?"

"That's no argument; that's a misstatement o' fact."

"You'd be pretty well cleaned out, I guess."

Rocks grinned. "Oh, well, there's more where that came from."

"Money's a great little thing to have," observed Flood. "I've always managed my business in such a way as to take the least possible chances of loss."

Rocks Tracy experienced one of those violent and almost irresistible impulses to kill Flood, which some particularly obnoxious remark of the financier was capable of prompting.

"What are you?" he asked with a sneer he could not help. "One o' them sure-thing gamblers?"

Far from taking offense, Flood grinned complacently. It was one of the most insulting elements in his attitude toward the boxer—that willingness to be frank about his own vicious instincts, as if he felt that a low fellow like Tracy would appreciate and applaud.

"It's always well to be as sure as you can," Flood said. "What's the use of throwing money to the birds? What's the good of race-track tips and stock-market information and all that sort of thing?"

"Lots of times they ain't no darned use, I guess."

"Lots of times they are mighty valuable—just so you know they are straight. I've made money many a time in that way."

"Yes, Mr. Flood, and I'll bet that lots o' times you've dropped a wad playin' the same game."

"Oh, well, we all make mistakes."

"You bet we do."

This conversation took place in Flood's office. The broker got some sheets and showed Tracy the records of a few market transactions just to prove his contention. Tracy scanned them with interested incomprehension.

Flood seemed to be in a talkative and confidential mood. Something told Rocks to make the most of his opportunity, so he cast his eyes about the room for a subject of possible conversation.

It was an ordinary enough office—a little dingy, a good deal cluttered with piles of papers, books of record and account, and various odds and ends. Two or three stenographers rattled busily at their machines, and several clerks and bookkeepers figured, wrote, dictated, or telephoned, as the requirements of the occasion demanded.

There was nothing luxurious nor up-to-date about Flood's office. The furniture did not match in material or design. There were few of the modern devices, such as vertical files and lately invented copying machinery.

An old-fashioned letterpress with a "steering-wheel" stood in a corner, and Tracy had more than once seen the office-boy twisting it with grumbling effort.

On shelves around the walls were boxes of papers—uniform-sized boxes of dark wood or of metal. Some of them had numbers, not arranged in any particular order; some of them were lettered with the names of various companies in which Flood was or had formerly been interested.

"Just what's the difference, Mr. Flood," hazarded Tracy, "between a plain company and a securities company?"

"The securities company markets the stock of the plain company," said Flood, smiling good-humoredly. He had made a lucky turn that day and was considerably elated.

"And what's a construction company, then?" demanded Rocks with innocent curiosity.

"Oh, that's an old-fashioned way of stacking the cards," said Flood lightly.

"What d'you mean, stackin' the cards?"

"Suppose you built a railroad with the proceeds of the sale of stock or bonds, or some other kind of borrowed money. You own the majority—the controlling part of the stock, see? You organize a construction company separate from the railroad company, and then you let yourself the contract to build the road at a fat profit. You don't much mind what happens to the railroad, do you, after that?"

"Oh, I see," said Rocks.

He didn't quite see yet, but he had a glimmer of the significance of what Flood

said. Later, when he thought it over carefully, it all came to him.

"That says 'Moscow Construction Company,'" he said, indicating one of the boxes. "I never heard of no Moscow Railroad."

"Oh, no, that was a fur company. The Moscow Furs Company imported raw furs and held 'em in storage. Bringing 'em in raw saved duties. The idea was to buy them when they were cheap and store them to wait for a rise. The construction company built the big warehouses for the fur company—see?"

"Well, did the fur company go up?"

"It sure did," laughed Flood. "The construction company got most of the money and held a lien on the buildings besides. The fur company failed and the construction company grabbed the whole works. I guess we—the people who owned the construction company cleaned up a quarter of a million."

"Gee!" remarked Rocks. "I guess I don't just get all that explanation—not quite. Did you say *you* was the construc—"

"Oh, no, of course not," said Flood, winking. "I was merely a sort of agent."

"One o' them fisckle agents, was you?"

"Oh, call it that if you like. Miss Meadows, give Mr. Tracy fifty dollars, will you please? Rocks, you're the highest paid employee I've got."

"Well," said Rocks, "any time you want to quit, say so. You got your money's worth, ain't you?"

"I'm as hard as nails," said the broker. "We'll keep it up a while longer. Only I wish you'd let me have a little more liquor, Rocks. This water-wagon stunt is getting tiresome."

"Go ahead," said Rocks genially. "Drink your head off, for all of me. It's your own funeral, not mine."

"Well, you see," the broker went on, leading back to the subject topmost in his mind, "making money ain't such a hard job if you know how to—er—stack the cards."

"I never played none o' them kind of games," said Rocks. "I wouldn't know how."

"You're an innocent old fox, Rocksy," said Flood. "Come in here a minute."

He led the way into a small inner office, a room he seldom used because of its bad ventilation, but in which upon occasion he transacted various items of a kind which would hardly stand much ventilation, anyhow. He closed the door, turning on the lights, and sat down.

"Tracy," he said, "you're nobody's fool, are you?"

"I've done some awful foolish things in my life, if I ain't."

Rocks was not certain that coming into this ill-omened room was not one of them.

"I don't suppose you ever heard of a fixed prize-fight?" hazarded Flood.

"What's this?" asked Tracy suspiciously. "Another construction company scheme?"

"Construction companies are sometimes very profitable, as I told you."

Tracy would have blurted, "None in mine, thank you," and left the room; but curiosity prompted him to stay. He wanted to find out just how bad a crook Flood was; and he was finding out pretty fast.

"What's the idea?" he asked, forcing a grin.

"Well, with the betting odds the way they're heading now, suppose this Smiling Swede could be induced to lay down?"

The uncanny sixth sense that sometimes nudges an elbow told Rocks that Flood didn't mean that. But he followed the lead.

"Some one would cop a lot of easy coin," Tracy said. "But it can't be done. Jensen can make more by winnin'. He's got things fixed just right. He'll get not only the whole purse, but the hog's share of the fighters' sixty per cent of the gate. The club gets the other forty. He couldn't afford to lay down. Besides, I guess he's a square guy at that. I never heard nothin' against him that way."

"All right," said Flood cheerfully. "How about the other fellow?"

"What—Terry?" Tracy had been waiting for this; now that it was out, it was hard to believe. "You're nutty, Mr. Flood."

"Suppose Terry wins," went on Flood. "What does he get?"

"Three-quarters of the prize money and sixty per cent of the fighters' share of the gate."

"Jensen drove a stiff bargain with you."

"Sure he did. Funny part of it was, he was pretty near desperate for some one to back him. I thought I could make a

darn good deal with him—had it all framed up—when, whoop! along comes some gink with the coin and Jensen went up like a balloon. It sure did raise the dickens with me, Mr. Flood."

The broker smiled slyly.

"What would you say," he asked, "if I told you *I* was backing Jensen?"

Tracy considered for two astonished seconds. Then he answered coolly:

"I'd believe you, all right." He wanted to add: "You're just darned fool enough."

"Now, Rocks," said Flood, "let's get this thing down to a reasonable basis. You admit that if your man wins he won't be rich after paying his training expenses. Jensen's been too sharp for you."

"Well?"

"He wasn't too sharp for me. If Jensen wins, he isn't going to be any John D. Vanderbilt by the time he's settled with me. It's worth a lot to me to have him win. Likewise, my friends and I will have a hundred thousand dollars on this fight, even if the odds are as high as two to one—provided we are sure that Jensen won't lose."

Every honest drop of blood in Rocks Tracy's veins cried out to him to take Flood into his strong hands and beat his brains out against the wall. Every decent instinct of loyalty and sportsmanship—and take him by and large he had as many as most men—tugged at his elbow and sang:

"Smash him just once—just one good wallop, Rocks!"

But he mastered his sickening disgust.

"I don't see how you can work it," he began lamely. He was tongue-tied with anger, but the light was poor and Flood could not see his blazing eyes. In fact, he mistook the significance of Rocks's hesitancy.

"Do you think ten—yes, fifteen thousand dollars would have any weight with young Mack?" he asked.

Tracy shifted uneasily from one foot to the other.

"It's a lot of money," said Flood. "Probably more than you'd get if you won, unless you bet your head off. And you're too old a bird to do that against a man like Jensen."

"I ain't got a whole barrel o' money to bet, anyhow," said Tracy. He sighed and became suddenly embarrassed.

"Take my proposition," urged Flood, "and what you have got you can bet right."

"That's so," agreed Tracy.

"What do you say?"

"It—well, it depends on Terry."

"Will you see him?"

"Sure I'll see him."

"What do you think he'll do?"

"He'll do whatever I tell him to, that's what he'll do," said Tracy cheerfully. He had gotten over the desire to kill Flood—just yet.

A couple of days later, at Stagg's, Flood asked anxiously: "Have you seen your man?"

"U-huh," nodded Tracy.

"What did he say? Will he do it?"

"You said you'd give fifteen thousand cool?"

"Yes; that's it."

"Well, then," said Tracy, "listen. I'll tell you what I'll do. I ain't goin' to have you nor no other man able to say Rocks Tracy ever threw a fight. I wouldn't promise the President of these here United States to do no such thing; not flat-footed.

"But here's how matters stand with me: Winnin', we git in all less than eight thousand; losin', we git pretty near nothin', an' pay our expenses out of that. You come along with fifteen thousand if we lose.

"Now, let me tell you somethin' more. This guy Terry wants to git married, see, and quit the ring. He wants to go out West an' start a ranch or somethin'. Now if you was in his boots, what 'd *you* do? And if you was in mine, what would you *advise* him to do?"

"I'd advise him to jump at a chance like this," cried Flood eagerly.

"Why, of course you would!" agreed Rocks. "That's a *cinch!*"

"Then you'll do it?"

"Mr. Flood, on the night that Jensen licks Terry Mack I'll come round and collect fifteen thousand dollars offen you—that's all I got to say. If you want me to say more, you'll have to want. I'm all through. If you're satisfied, act according. If you ain't—well, maybe Jensen 'll lick him anyhow."

He grinned, winked, nodded, and tipping his hat over one eye, went out, leaving Flood standing alone.

"Of course he'll do it, of course he'll do it," said the broker to himself. "Foxy

old Tracy! He's nobody's fool; he can see through a hole in a ladder."

Meanwhile, Tracy, plodding off toward the bridge for his Brooklyn car, scratched his head in a great deal of perplexity.

"Now, am I as dirty a crook as he is, or am I just tryin' to recover stolen goods? What would Terry say if he knew? My Heavens, if the boy *should* lose now, I'm ruined!

"One thing's sure—I'll never take a cent of his dirty bribe if Jensen does win. Terry's bound to win, anyhow. Wonder if I'd better tell him? No, nor momma either. They'd set up a howl and peel my hide off.

"Anyhow, I didn't lie to that robber. Yes, I did, though; I said Terry wanted to get married. Oh, well, that's only trimmin's. Gor-rye! Who would old Terry marry, anyhow? I don't s'pose he's spoke to a skirt in over a year, except momma."

And oddly enough, all this happened on a certain day in late June upon which Miss Jeanne Flood had expressed the desire to own a farm!

CHAPTER XIV.

Momma Writes a Letter.

ROCKS found a letter in the little mail-box on the door of the Greenpoint house that night. It read something as follows, although to reproduce the spelling and punctuation would demand nothing short of photography:

DEAR ROCKS:

I feel I got to write you and say you better come up again real soon and have a talk with Terry. You know that girl I wrote about the one that came down the night Katie was sick and Terry boy run all the way in the dark to get the doctor well it is just like I told you her name is Flood all right and she is his sister I mean Flood's of course

She is awful pretty, as pretty as any sunset you ever see and we have some sunsets up here as you know yourself Now Rocks you will be surprised by what I tell you, Terry is gone on her I know it and I accused him of it and he admitted it right off the reel and the funny part of it is she is actually dippy over the boy

I don't think he has saw her only once or twice since that night she is stopping up to the hotel with her mother and she is an invalid I mean her mother but Terry stops around the house here and does training stunts all day except to-day he is away somewheres he had on his good clothes so maybe he is calling on Miss Flood I do not blame him she is lovely How could her brother be such a skunk beats me

Now this is something to think of whether you will advise Terry to call this fight off for of course no girl like that is going to marry no prize-fighter and you and I should not let our interests interfere with Terry

You have said many a time you did not do it only for the money but to make a man of Terry well you have did that and he is a job to be proud of

So why not come up here and tell Terry not to fight Jensen for it will surely get out who he really is and queer him forever with this girl and all the people he used to go with you know as you have said some day he will be discontented with such folks as us and then we would not stand in his way to take his place back where he belongs

Prize-fighting is all right for people like us but not for our Terry so come right away and please bring three lbs of best creamery butter I don't like this farmer's butter we get here and Katie sends love and wants some gum drops

Your loving

MOMMA

Poor Rocks sat and read this letter twice through by the whistling gas.

"Momma is sure some letter-writer when she gets going," he thought. "I'm afraid she's got the right dope, too."

Far into the night he sat, smoking an occasional five-cent cigar. It had been nearly two weeks since his last flying visit to Callayoga. What a lot could happen in two weeks!

Never in all his days had he faced a problem of such complications. In the first place, he had set his heart on the profits of a fight in the result of which he had absolute confidence. If he canceled the fight now, the forfeit money would go to Jensen, and he would be the laughing-stock of everybody he knew.

He had never been a popular figure among the sporting fraternity—he was too thrifty. Now he would be discredited as one who had "pulled" a "false alarm."

Again he had, through the most fortuitous of circumstances, come by the means of putting one over on Mr. A. P. Flood. He had not sought this opportunity. Flood's own greed and fatuous eagerness for any sort of financial intrigue that promised a crooked dollar had led him into a trap of his own contrivance.

Terry *did* want to clean up and go West; so did Rocks. The vision of little Katie, racing upon a pony around a large, grassy field, which represented Tracy's idea of a "purairie," had become a loving obsession with him.

And the fascination of growing things—of young calves and a lot of dogs and horses, puppies and colts, was very real, as evidence of which consider the kitchen garden beyond the punching-bag stand behind the house.

If the Tracys had rendered service to Terry Mack, had he not paid them back liberally with the material of which ambition is made? Time was when Tracy climbed through the ropes and fought for the pure love of combat; now he loftily despised the profession of pugilism.

But *Terry's* happiness—*Terry's* future—what of them? Should Rocks Tracy go forward now and tear down what he had so laboriously and proudly builded—a man?

Mrs. Rocks was right—it wasn't all for the game or the money, but because he had seen in rigorous training a means to a definite end, the one salvation for the broken, despondent young man.

Nature had made Gessler a natural boxer; in college he had taken interest in no other form of sport. He had been excellent material in the molding hands of the experienced Rocks. With the alcohol once out of his system it had been easy to do physical wonders with him.

That identification by his own kind would inevitably follow the big fight with Jensen, Rocks made no doubt. But he had supposed that Terry did not care two cents. It would be his last fight, and the family would move West and buy the coveted ranch with the proceeds.

Then if Terry wanted to get married, he could; in fact, it was eminently fitting that he should. Rocks pictured to himself a serene old age, of which the principal occupation would be teaching Terry's kids how to box.

And maybe little Katie— Oh, what was the use?

"I guess it's all over now," thought Rocks gloomily. "If the boy's going to marry this skirt, I'd look nice putting a crimp into her brother, wouldn't I?"

Terry would certainly refuse any share of gains so obtained under the circumstances. Even leaving the sister out of all consideration, Rocks felt pretty doubtful of persuading the young man to sanction the results of such a plan.

"I'd never tell him, anyhow," thought Tracy, grinning to himself. Then he sighed again and repeated the somber query:

"What's the use?"

Next morning he slipped out of the house at dawn, caught a succession of early cars, and on the first train for Callayoga continued the vain process of his self-questioning. No satisfactory answers were vouchsafed him.

"Hello, Rocksy!" cried his wife, crushing him in an Amazonian embrace. "Katie! Katie girl! Here's poppa come back."

A plump whirlwind battered upon him for attention.

"And where's Terry?" he demanded. "What's that young lobster been up to now, I'd like to know?"

"He's off some place climbin' trees or fightin' wildcats for practise, I guess," said Mrs. Tracy. "He's about as cheerful as one of them critters—if he meets one it'll be 'good night, cat,' the way he feels these days.

"I think he's seen the girl lately—yesterday. He took my letter and mailed it out to the ru'l delivery box, the one you must have got last night. He never come back till afternoon, and I couldn't get a word out of him. He's Silent Terry, all right, when he wants to be. Looks like she's threw him down."

"She wouldn't unless she found out what he's workin' at."

"Well, what was to keep her from findin' out, after comin' here and pipin' all the athaletic goods we got layin' around, an' them pitchers on the walls, all the bruisers that ever fit, from old John L. down to—to—Rocks Tracy?"

"You can go no lower, woman," said her husband.

"Was it my letter that brought you?"

"What else? There's the— Run out and play, Katie. Poppa wants to talk with momma a little while. As I was sayin' there's the—the piper to pay, I should think."

"Will the fight go on?" she asked with a melancholy foreboding.

"The forfeit's posted," he responded gloomily.

"How much?"

"Five thousand—and half of it Terry's. Only for them boxin' lessons I been givin' that skunk Flood we'd had a hard squeeze this summer."

"Is he as bad as he's been painted?"

"Momma, as sure's I live they's no paint black enough to do him justice. I thought I knew some bad men, but he's ten times as bad as the worst of them."

"No! Ain't it a shame?"

"It's a shame I let him live this long. It's a shame I'd sink so low as to lend myself to help len'then his life by curin' that groggy old liver he has. He's as fine and sassy as a boy.

"I'm only hopin' he'll take to the booze again—it's the one thing he needs to rid the world of him. I'm a pretty raw guy myself, but the very face of him in the same room wit' me is a insult. And I've stood him now for six solid weeks and how much longer it will be I don't know. I'm likely to forget myself and kill him yet."

"You better be careful, Rocks. I never knew you to hate any one that bad."

"It's an honor to him for a man like me to notice him enough to hate him. I wisht I didn't hafter."

"Keep away from him, then. Terry told you that, long time since. If he's that bad it 'll soil your hands to touch him."

"Lord, woman, I'm soiled already. Where's the soap?"

Terry came in at noon.

"Hello, Rocks, old top!" he cried, his somber face lighting up with real pleasure. "We didn't expect you for another week, did we, momma?"

"*You* didn't," said the woman. "*I* thought he might drop in on us."

"You never told me. There isn't anything wrong, is there?"

A sleepless night, a tedious journey, and much hard thinking had made its mark on Tracy. And in his turn he viewed with concern the new lines of suffering in the young man's face.

"I come up here to get a vacation from that man Flood, I guess," said Rocks with a sickly grin.

Terry winced.

"Who do you suppose it is advanced the coin for Jensen's trainin'?" asked Tracy.

Terry stared, comprehending, aghast.

"Not Flood!" he exclaimed.

"That's who."

Terry pulled forward a chair and sat down. Then he arose and went to the mantel, where he found a box of cigarettes.

"Just one, Rocks," he said. "I need it badly."

"Smoke all you want to," said the trainer. "If a little blow like that 'll drive you to them nails, I guess the next one I hand you'll send you to the bottle. It's in the closet over the sink—marked, 'F'r m'dicinal use only.'"

It was a rough joke, and Rocks knew it. All three laughed and the tension of the moment relaxed. Also, the cigarette-smoke soothed Terry.

"Momma wrote me a letter—that's what made me come up," said Tracy. "I hear you been gettin' into—into trouble. I thought maybe I could help you out. I ain't blamin' you none!"

"You wouldn't blame him that much," cried the loyal Mrs. Rocks, "if you could see *her!*"

Terry looked helplessly from one to the other. He shook his head, grinned sadly, and took another pull at his cigarette.

"You people are certainly the finest in the world," he said.

"Oh, no, we ain't," said Rocks. "Well, momma is, of course; but I ain't—not a bit of it."

"The best in the world," insisted Terry.

"I've lost all your money for you, boy," said the ex-pugilist. "I'm a kind of a—a—absconder, or whatever you call it."

"What you been doing?" inquired Terry with a faint show of interest. "Bucking the ponies? You're welcome to it."

"Worse 'n that," said Tracy. "Then I'd had a chance to get it back. This way I just throwed it away. I've chucked up the fight wit' Jensen after postin' the forfeit money."

"No, no—of course you haven't done that," cried Terry, springing to his feet. "You haven't done *that!*"

"I'll pay you back some day, Terry. But my own went with it—twenty-five hundred apiece."

"It isn't the money," stormed the young man; "I wouldn't mind the money. It's the fight—the fight! Don't say you've thrown that up."

"But you can't fight Jensen."

"Why not? Why can't I fight him? I'm in the best condition I've ever been in. I can whip him—you know it, Rocks. It means a lot of money to you—to us."

"Money be darned," said Rocks. "They's somethin' else besides money in this world. We won't any of us starve."

"But what does this mean, Tracy? What's come over you? You talk like a crazy man."

"Well, Terry, I'll tell you what it means. It means that you've got to get into some respectable business—like—like—bankin'."

"But I don't want to do that. I'm going West, as you know, after this fight. I thought we had our minds made up to that. Besides, I couldn't get a job anywhere, least of all in a bank."

"Sure you could. Some of your old friends would do it for you easy."

"Rocks, you're bughouse—crazy as a loon! For the love of all that's good and great, *what* has got into you? Let me smell your breath—you aren't drunk, are you?"

"No, only unusual sensible. You're so used to me the other way it looks strange to you. Now listen. S'pose you go into this fight. Where do you fit with the girl, eh?"

"Girl?" repeated Terry. "Girl? Don't say girl to me. I can't stand that, you know."

"Answer me one question, Terry. Wouldn't Miss Flood marry you if you went into some respectable business and never let nobody know you'd been a prize-fighter?"

"I don't know; she might. But I'm not going to do that, you see."

"Why ain't you?"

"Oh, Rocks, what's the use of arguing?"

But they did argue for an hour or more. The luncheon on the table grew cold. Mrs. Rocks shed tears. Little Katie, coming in to find her mother wet and wobegone, joined her own brine with the maternal rivulets and made the air hideous with her mourning.

"My Heavens!" cried Rocks at last. "If I ain't nutty now, I will be in two minutes. Terry, you're the wrong-headedest jackass I ever knew in my life. You ain't got the faintest notions of reasonableness. I'm goin' out an' cool off."

He seized a cap and slammed the screen door after him.

"Poor Rocks!" said momma. "I sh'd think he would want to git out o' here. Hush, Katie child. Terry, you'd try the patience of a saint. Go an' sit on the piazza or some place. I'm tired o' the sight o' you."

A stern resolve had formed in the breast of Rocks Tracy. Probably Miss Flood would be about the hotel at this time of day.

No matter what she may think of Terry—or Teddy, as she knew him—he was determined that she should know the truth about the whole affair. He wanted her to see that his influence was entirely upon her side; that he had done and was doing his best to save the young man from his own folly.

He had very little idea of the approved style of address in approaching a young lady of what he called "heavy circles," when one had never met her. But he would try.

He plodded briskly along the road toward the hotel, heedless of the heat and its effect upon his appearance. The Callayoga Inn loomed in the distance.

CHAPTER XV.

Rocks Goes Calling.

FOR twenty-four hours Miss Jeanne Flood had kept to her room. This was odd, for the weather was as beautiful as ever, the air as soft, the green, throbbing countryside as tempting. Anxious inquiry elicited the information that she was feeling badly—that she had a headache.

One of the young men at the inn sent up a basket of fruit; another contributed flowers. Jeanne turned over both gifts to the nurse for the use and behoof of her mother.

The awakening from her rosy dream of love had been most painful. She told herself that her knowledge of all the facts should have been enough to admit of certain deductions, according to her boasted habits of reasoning, which would have precluded the possibility of such a surprise.

Ted had been very cruel, she thought. He might as well have struck her with his fist, according to the approved fashion of his profession. The blow could not have hurt worse—no, not so much!

A prize-fighter! And such a prize-fighter, too—one of the prominent few in the vulgar world of fisticuffs. True, none among his former friends knew as yet that the redoubtable Terry Mack was their own Teddy Gessler, the racy young clubman who had dropped out of sight more than a year ago.

But he was actually "rising in his profession"—Heaven save the mark! Think of it! Before long she should see his picture staring truculently out from among coarse, black head-lines, in a welter of "wallops," so to speak.

He admitted that the secret would not survive his next scheduled battle, which was to be fought against a Scandinavian person called "the Swedish Polecat," or some equally loathsome pseudonym. She had heard Anselm speak of this Silent Terry. And he was her lover—her accepted lover!

She had been kissed and embraced by a common prize-fighter. She remembered how he looked at the time, and how his arms had felt about her shoulders; she blushed when she realized that the recollection was not one of unmixed disgust. He was very strong, and as handsome a man as ever lived, and his fine eyes had blazed with that wonderful, sweet fire of love—just the love that she had been hungry for all these long, forlorn, remorseful months. He had come back, and she had known the ecstasy of his love for one brief half-hour—and now she had lost him, this time forever!

Jeanne, in her clear-thinking way, was reluctant to lay fault at Gessler's door. He had been badly treated, abused, crushed, actually flung out to the wolves. She blamed circumstances for the manner of his rehabilitation—and standing out of the sad jumble of these circumstances she imagined she saw the repulsive features of one Rocks Tracy.

It was hard to reconcile that brutal countenance with his relationship to the whole-souled woman, the vast mother of snuggly little Katie, the woman with those amazing blue eyes, so full of good-humor and understanding. She could not picture such a man as the father of Katie—dainty, plump, appealing Katie. It was like imagining the child sitting upon the lap of the unspeakable god Moloch! Jeanne shuddered.

After Gessler had dealt her that stunning blow, that "I am a prize-fighter" missile, she had said almost nothing. He had talked on and on, justifying and explaining — empty, almost meaningless words, and now ill-remembered.

The Tracys had been kind to him; he must not betray their trust in him; he wished he were dead; he was unworthy of her love, of course—oh, words, words, words, *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam!* She had driven the car swiftly, unswervingly back to the mouth of the cart-path to the Tracy cottage.

Gessler had jumped out, and she had let in the clutch on the high speed, with the car at a standstill. Consequently the motor stalled.

Gessler had stepped forward and spun the crank,

"Thank you," said Jeanne and moved away in a little cloud of blue-carbon smoke without saying good-by.

Gessler had stood by the road, hat in hand, until she was out of sight. She knew he did that; yet she did not look around. She could feel his somber eyes boring into her back until she turned the curve and began the long climb toward the hotel.

Over and over she had reviewed this little scene in her mind's eye, and the sad-eyed young man would not be gainsaid. There he stood, hat in hand, haunting her like a pale ghost, no matter what she set her hand to do, no matter what she tried to read.

Whereupon she wished she were dead—as dead as her love for the sad-eyed young man, which by the way was not dead at all.

At somewhere in the neighborhood of three o'clock one of her bell-boy satellites brought up a card.

"Mr. Ribbets, the clerk, told him he couldn't see you; you was off your feed—I mean you was ill," said the youngster. "But he said it was very important, very. Besides, he's a big, fierce-lookin' guy, and I guess Mr. Ribbets was kinder scart of him."

A scrawly signature on the card, in still moist ink, set forth the caller's name, "R. Tracy."

Jeanne shuddered, visioning little Katie on the knees of Moloch.

"I—I can't see him, really," said she. Then, seized by a quite inexplicable impulse, something quite outside the orderly

reasoning habit of her mind, she said: "Yes, I *will*. Tell him I'll be down very soon."

On entering the padded cell, scene of her late disastrous interview with Ted Gessler, she paused, rather breathless. When one has steeled oneself to lay a hand in the brazen palm of Moloch—

"*You* are Mr. Tracy?" she said.

"Yes'm," said Tracy, without troubling to confirm Miss Flood's identity. ("Thank Heavens," he thought, "she don't look nothin' like A. P.")

Jeanne saw rather a large man, a little inclined to rotundity from lack of hard exercise, with mild, brown eyes and a wide, good-humored, but now very serious face. His nose had met with some sort of violence—she shuddered to think what sort—and one of his ears had a curious, serrated look; but aside from these signs of his calling he was quite like other men.

His clothes fitted him badly, and he had a nervous habit of stuffing a finger down inside the low collar which encircled his large, red neck, as if trying to readjust it in the hope of a more copious supply of air. His hair was thin, and had been allowed to grow quite long so that it could be brought up over the top of his head to conceal the extent of his bald spot.

This hair, owing to the heat, had become a pathetic sort of wisp which quite failed to perform its function. His face, red and anxious, revealed a genuine distress of soul. When he extended a large hand and found that his hostess ignored it he became pitifully embarrassed and sat down. Jeanne remained standing, and her caller immediately arose again.

It was ridiculous to suppose this fellow anything more than a common yokel, a bumpkin from "up the road a piece." His shoes and trouser bottoms were white with dust.

"I don't know as you ever heard of me, miss," he began.

"Oh, yes, I have," she said, and something impelled her to smile. Considerably encouraged, Rocks proceeded.

"Your brother now—he might have mentioned me. I done him quite a lot of good, don't you think so?"

"He is looking very well—or was, the last time I saw him."

"He's lookin' still better now," said Rocks. "He's took off thirty pounds in six weeks."

"I think he could spare it," she said, trying to be gracious.

She was really almost as embarrassed as Rocks; she merely knew a little better how to conceal it.

"And then Mr. Mack—Gessler, I should say. He's a very good friend o' mine."

"Yes," said Jeanne in an almost inaudible tone.

"What?" asked Tracy.

"Yes; he's spoken of you, too," she replied with an effort.

"Well, it's about him I come to see you. I'm under great obligations to Terry—Mr. Gessler, miss."

"Really?" she asked.

"Really," he repeated in unconscious imitation of her tone. "Fact is, he's been my best friend and partner for nearly two years. He's helped me make some money, which is the least he's done for me. He come to me at a time when I was in consider'ble difficulty—I might say distress—and what he done for me an' my family is worth more to me than all the dollars the' is in the world.

"Now I'm goin' to be real honest and open with you, Miss Flood, because I know you think—think well o' Terry, and you don't want to see him make no mistakes, no more 'n momma—my wife—an' I do."

He paused to consider the effect of this verbal skirmish-line.

Jeanne could not have been more astonished at the purport of the interview. She had expected a coarse, rude fellow, a blusterer, who, having come to the cottage to find his protege in rebellious mood, and fearing the likelihood that his man would withdraw from the scheduled contest, was now here to reason with her, to cajole, or even to threaten should she oppose or refuse to sanction the battle.

Instead she found a deprecatory, embarrassed creature, with round, appealing brown eyes, and a manner so mild that she doubted his ever having worn a boxing-glove.

Satisfied that he had as yet given no offense, Rocks went on.

"I'm sorry, but I got to talk just a little about a subject that I suppose you'd rather not listen to, but I guess it can't be helped. Last winter an' spring Terry's attracted consider'ble attention to himself as a boxer.

"I've helped him a little in the way of trainin' and advice, and he's been liberal

with me; in fact, he's split every dollar two ways, fifty-fifty, and we've banked it as fast as we got hold of it. Also we've did well givin' lessons.

"He got such a reputation that I thought some of tryin' to get a match for him with one o' the big fellows this fall. It would mean quite a neat little thing for us, of course. But it ain't no ways important.

"I been tryin' to get the boy to go back up-town and ask some of his old friends for to help him get a job. I realize this ain't no business for him; his place is among the—the swells. He's got sand and brains; he'd be a success at 'most anything he tried his hand at."

Rocks paused and mopped his moist brow with a very large, clean handkerchief. It surprised Jeanne to see how white that handkerchief was. Somehow she was being forced to revise her estimate of this man in a sort of tumbling haste.

"Of course he's shy about touchin' up the old pals; somehow he seems sort of set against 'em. There was one that handed him a raw deal, but I don't see 's the rest done nothin' much to him. I tell him they'd be glad to welcome him back."

"They would, Mr. Tracy, indeed they would!" cried Jeanne.

"Now here's where the pinch comes. He's such a loyal div—I mean duck—er—feller—"

Rocks stopped, mired in the intricacies of a too rich vocabulary.

"Go on, please go on," the girl begged and sat down, motioning him to do likewise.

"He's took a notion that somehow or other it 'll bother us folks to have him do it, that it 'll look like he's desertin' us, and we can't make him see no different. I wouldn't care, I'd let him go on and fight his head off, but—well, he can't afford to.

"Prize-fightin' ain't a gentleman's game, Miss Flood. I know, 'cause it's my business, and it *is* a business, too, not a sport. And a poor, cheap, rowdy business at that. It's all right for roughnecks like me, but Terry—Mr. Gessler ain't a roughneck; he's a gentleman—a fine, clean gentleman, Miss Flood. I want to save him if I can."

Rocks was passionately pleading a cause. He kept his voice low, but he was a little hoarse from excitement.

Jeanne suddenly felt a violent desire to cry. He was infinitely touching, this rough gutter hero, fighting a battle with unaccustomed weapons for the reputation, the future of his friend!

"I come here to see you, Miss Flood, because—well, you know why. He's crazy about you, and my wife says—well, she thinks you—you kinder like Terry. She likes you, too, my wife does.

"You come down there one night when our baby was sick—it was a grand thing to do—grand. We're under obligations to you, and we—we're fond of the boy. We tell him there's the happiness of two people at stake—we're afraid we're standin' in the way.

"I wanted you to know how we felt, Miss Flood. We're doin' all we can, but he's so blame stubborn—honest, I'm at my wit's end! Maybe I done wrong to come to see you, but—well, I'll go along back now. I've had my say. I guess you understand things a little better. I give you my word I'll stop this fight if—"

CHAPTER XVI.

Club Life Again.

JEANNE rose and held out a slim, brown hand.

"I would like to tell you, Mr. Tracy, that if I could thank you as you deserve for coming here, I would, but I simply don't know how! It's one of the most splendid things I have ever known any man to do.

"I want you to understand that I am proud to know you, and that the thing I like best about Mr. Gessler—Terry as you call him—is his loyalty to you. If he were not loyal to you, he would be a creature beneath contempt, and n-not a man at all."

She stopped and bit her lip, trying to control her emotion. She kept hold of Rock's great, hard paw as if it were something dependable and saving.

When she found her voice, she said:

"Please tell—Terry—to come here and see me, will you? And let it be this evening."

"I'll tell him," said Rocks. "But I don't know as he'll come, he's so pig-headed. Maybe now, if you could give me a little hint as to what you'd like to say to him—"

"Well, then," said the girl, her head high, her fine eyes level, "tell him this for me. Tell him that I say he is to go on and *fight!* Tell him I said he was right; that I am glad he has the sand, if you like—the determination to do it!

"And then, if he wants to discuss the matter with me, I shall be glad to give him my opinion any time he wants to call."

"Good Lord!" muttered Rocks, as he plodded down the hill. "*What* do you know about that? Ain't she some bird, that girl?"

He went along the road in a daze, forgetting to put his hat on, so that the hot June sun beat down, unnoticed, upon his thinly thatched head.

"My gracious!" cried Mrs. Rocks when he arrived at the cottage. "What 've you went and done? Fried what little brains you've got?"

"Where's Terry?"

"On the piazza, hatin' himself, poor boy. Go out and help him."

Rocks managed to deliver his message, surviving in the process Terry's indignation that he should have presumed to call upon Jeanne.

When the young man grasped the full import of it, sat a long time in puzzled silence. Then he turned and held out a hand to Rocks.

"I'll be darned if I know how you did it, old boy," he said. "I never could have, that's sure. So she says I'm to fight!

"And will I fight? Will I fight? But, Rocks, what was that you said about having lost your forfeit money? You didn't throw up the match, did you? Not really?"

"Well, I—I was just goin' to," said Tracy sheepishly. "I was just goin' to; but I didn't."

The reappearance of Theodore Gessler at the Youngsters' Club, looking well and prosperous, occasioned mild excitement and some whispering curiosity.

Where had he been for so long? What had he been doing? Where did he get the money which enabled him once more to take up his membership, to settle a lot of old bills, to wear good, if peaceable clothes?

It was no very difficult matter to persuade the board of governors to reinstate a Gessler upon the roster. Ted merely dropped a line to Wingo Bruitte about it, and Wingo lost no time.

One crusty old chap raised some question.

"But I thought this fellow was a sort of rowdy—it seems to me we had to warn him about his conduct."

"Don't you worry," said Wingo. "You'll never have to warn him again. He's sworn off."

Terry had demurred when Rocks Tracy had urged him to make himself known in the world of his carefree days.

"They'll tumble to me, Rocks," he said. "Somebody will get wise, sure."

"It's doubtful if they do, boy," said Tracy. "People are a long time discoverin' things that's right under their noses, especially when they ain't lookin' for them. A man ain't supposed to be in two places at once.

"If you blow in casual like to that club of yours, then shine up to the old ladies on Sunday afternoons, or maybe some o' the young ones, it 'll look as natural as paint on a chorus-girl.

"You see, your fights haven't brought you no great amount of prominence—not up-town, anyhow. I don't believe your map has ever been in a paper in connection with a fight—except a few o' them ringside sketches; and the Lord knows them ain't likely to be reco'nized. You don't have to overdo it—just once in a while's enough. Miss Jeanne says you can't afford not to."

"That settles it," said Gessler.

So he consented, not without qualms, to take a place, not conspicuous, but still his own, in the up-town life of the city.

Truth to tell, when he once more became used to the feel of a silk hat and a stick, it pleased him exceedingly to appear occasionally in the garb of fashion. After all, no one in New York was more clearly entitled to do so.

The summertime emptiness of up-town New York was all in Gessler's favor, to be sure. Most of the houses were closed and shuttered.

Business men, whose summer homes were near enough, commuted or motored back and forth between house and office daily. Those who, by reason of distance, could not do this, lived at hotel or club from Monday until Friday.

Vacations multiplied absences into the thousands. Gessler could come and go as he pleased, and see very few people whom he knew.

The cottage at Callayoga was deserted

the middle of July; for Terry must be nearer town, where his training would be under the watchful eye of Rocks Tracy. No one except those immediately interested knew the location of the quarters.

Rocks had secured a little farm within twenty-five miles of New York, on the New Haven road. The neighbors were not too near. Mrs. Tracy kept house, Katie played about, and a peaceful mask of domesticity disguised the warlike purpose to which the establishment was dedicated.

Through the closed but loosely hung doors of the barn an alert and discriminating person might have recognized the quick shuffle of feet, the impact of blows upon flesh, the hoarse breathing of men under stress. Then would follow the staccato tat-tat-tat of the punching-bag, the click of dumb-bells, or the thump of feet that skipped a swirling rope.

Rocks lost his rotundity of figure under the strenuous demands of the life.

"Say, momma, I ain't felt so good in years," he would say. "I'm gettin' back to me old form. Maybe I might yet go after some of them young guys; I'm thinkin' they ain't so much but an old dog like me could learn them a few. I've just given Terry boy the time of his life."

"Your eye looks like it," said Mrs. Rocks. "Go put a cold cloth on it. I hope poor Terry finds Jensen as easy as you."

"Gwan, woman, I can stand him on his head, if I like!"

"Keep on kiddin' yourself, if it cheers you up any," bantered Mrs. Rocks. "But don't you bust Terry's features none; if you do it won't be me you'll reckon with, but Miss Jeanne."

"I got to learn him how to protect that handsome mug o' his, ain't I? If I don't, Jensen will remove it entirely, or turn it upside down maybe. An' the only way he'll learn to protect it is to *protect* it, see? So I got to take a punch at his beezer now an' then—"

"You get him so careful of his face, he'll forget his stomach," warned Mrs. Rocks. "They say that Jensen has a hook that's something fierce—"

"My Lord!" cried Rocks in despair. "You can't satisfy a woman, nohow."

Mrs. Rocks laughed, and held out a sizzling hot, brown doughnut just from the pan.

"An' me trainin'," grumbled Rocks, munching the delicacy. "Don't you go feedin' Terry no sinkers now, will you, momma? He's that soft for you he'd eat a pavin' block if you put frostin' on it."

"You go weed your garden, Rocksy; and see if the's anything in it good for dinner. How's them peas? They oughter be pretty well filled."

Rocks had taken the farm furnished, and with the spring and early summer work well advanced. He and Terry found farm labor good conditioning procedure.

Terry, at the end of a row, would straighten up and groan:

"Holy Mike, Rocks! This weeding makes my back ache like a tooth."

"That's the stuff, kid. It's them back muscles that needs workin'."

With the pleasant, if laborious, farming, supplemented by hard boxing and regular gymnasium practise, Terry's condition became magnificent. He was as brown as an Indian, straight, tall, lean, capable of any amount of exertion without fatigue.

The work of preparation for the coming battle thus lost its drudgery, and took on a fascination for its own sake.

"By gosh, Jed," remarked one neighbor to another, "that family livin' on the Bascom place is jest makin' things hum. Old Bascom never had it lookin' so good since I've knowed him."

"'S right, Jim. You noticed that there hired man they've got? He's a big critter —an' strong! Say, I seen 'em aout mendin' stun wall t'other day, an' say, that feller was liftin' rocks so big I s'posed a stump-extractor wouldn't budge 'em."

"Yas," agreed Jim. "An' Henry Witcher was tellin' me they ain't sat'sfied to work farmin' all day; every arternoon they git in that barn an' wale the tar out o' each other."

"What," queried Jed, "fight?"

"Uh-huh! Hen seen 'em. Went over to borry a hoe or suthin', an' ketched 'em at it. Said they had on some kinder mittens, stuffed like, to keep from hurtin' s'much."

"Oh," said Jed, "them's boxin' gloves. Them don't hurt none."

"Maybe not, maybe not. The hired man wanted Hen to put on a pair an' try 'em. Hen said no thanks, he was more careful of his features. Hen says the way them fellers whacked each other would knock down a hoss; an' they didn't seem

to have no grudge, neither. Just done it for fun."

"Dum queer kinder fun, I call it," commented Jed.

Once in every few days a motor-car, turned into the roadway of the old Bascom place, a motor-car driven by a slim, brown young girl. At the bray of the horn in the side yard, little Katie would come running to greet Miss Jeanne, and Momma Tracy, at the porch door, would call a rich welcome from her deep, round throat.

Jeanne and her mother were back in town now. Mrs. Flood had been benefited by the stay at Callayoga. The fine, dry air and pure water were most salutary; but she missed the comforts of her own room at home, where she had been for so long.

Even the thick quiet of the country nights oppressed her. She liked to lie and listen to the *klup-klup-klup* of the cab-horses in the street, to the hum of motors, to the hundred and one noises that are heard only from a city bedroom. She would go to Callayoga another season; but she had had enough for the present.

So Jeanne packed her up like some fragile ornament, and had her taken back to New York as comfortably as was possible in a Pullman car.

To be at home suited Jeanne very well. She liked to be near Terry—she hardly ever called him Ted now. As often as once a week he came to the house to see her; and just as frequently she motored out to Bascom's to spend a few hours with the Tracy family.

She liked Mrs. Rocks immensely—and this was the only fitting way to like a person of Mrs. Rocks's inches. But Tracy amused and fascinated the girl more as she grew to know him better.

He was so naive, so direct, so simple.

"I can't understand Tracy," she said to Terry. "He's a delightful enigma to me. He seems as innocent as a child, and yet—"

"And yet," put in Gessler, "you know all the time he's as wise as a serpent and as deep as a well. He's a great old Rocks."

"Yes," agreed Jeanne, "he certainly is a great old Rocks."

On the days she chose to visit them, the family often found it pleasant to have luncheon in the orchard.

"Terry and I are going to have a farm some day, aren't we, Terry?" she said.

"Or a ranch."

"All the ranches are so far from New York," said Jeanne.

"That," said Mrs. Rocks, "is what recommends 'em to me. Look at Katie—she's never been so well in her life as this summer; though she's always been strong. But will you mind the color of her. She eats like a small pig."

"Come on, Rocks, it's an hour since we finished lunch," said Terry, rising from the ground where he had been reclining at Jeanne's elbow. "We've got to get busy."

"Are you going to box?" asked the girl. "Come on, Mrs. Tracy; let's watch them."

"I don't know as I want to see two boobs trying to beat each other's heads off," said the big woman contemptuously. "They don't seem to accomplish nothing. I sometimes think I could take the two of them across my knees like a couple of bad boys."

This was the first time Jeanne had expressed the wish to see the men box. Mrs. Tracy came along grumblingly, protesting that she ought to be doing her dishes. Rocks and Terry exchanged glances.

Mrs. Rocks and Jeanne sat on a bale of pressed hay and watched the two men, who led and countered, ducked, skipped, and made what appeared to be a great deal of work of a very small affair. Only once or twice was there any exchange of what could by courtesy be called blows.

After a while Jeanne rose, and together she and Mrs. Rocks started for the house.

"Thank you so much, gentlemen," Jeanne paused to say innocently. "It was very—interesting; you seem so polite about it, too. I'm glad you didn't find occasion to—er—strike each other. That would have been so rude!"

She smiled at Terry, her brown eyes upon his face in a slanting gaze that made him wince.

"What's the use of tryin' to fool 'em?" said Rocks. "That girl knowed we was stallin'. Say, she can make you feel sheepish as the deuce, can't she, and not hardly say a word? I'd hate to have to get the best of her for my livin'. I'd starve. She's got a mind like a steel trap. She's clever, kid; she's clever!"

"Yes, Rocks, she's clever. But just how she's figuring to get away with this situation is more than I can fathom."

"Leave it to her, boy. The reason you can't fathom her's 'cause she's so deep. Is that a joke or a—a—epitaph? Come on now put up your maulies. We've fooled long enough. Make believe I'm Jensen."

CHAPTER XVII.

Flood Issues a Mandate.

ANSELM FLOOD had begun to tire of the rigors of Rocks Tracy's régime. The regular exercise and restricted diet had done wonders for him—had, as he believed, put him back where he had been ten years before.

His association with Bill Wallace and other henchmen of the Smiling Swede had done him no good, however. When they came to his house for conference, he always set out bottles and glasses; it was irksome to sit and see them put away his good liquor while his own mouth watered unsatisfied.

Now that Jeanne and her mother were back from the country, Flood decided that it would not do to have these rough-necks spend so many evenings at his house; so they met at a down-town hotel. Thus his association with them became known, and it was not long before the suspicion that he was actively backing Jensen grew into certainty.

Flood refused, however, to confirm the fact; on the contrary, he strenuously denied having any financial interest in the contest except that of an enthusiast and possible bettor.

Flood was a lavish spender; but he began to find the extravagance of the Swede and his training-camp methods a serious drain. Flood had always made money with apparent ease; but his connection with several rather shady transactions had not helped his credit any.

He could raise, in various ways, considerable sums of money, but such loans were obtained only at high rates of interest and on short-time paper.

The banks and other conservative channels of credit were practically all closed to him. His real estate holdings were heavily mortgaged, and if he owned any securities of substantial worth as collateral, they were already tied up to the limit of their borrowing value.

Flood's living expenses were not less than twenty to twenty-five thousand a year. He could easily make this much as a stock broker, provided he attended to business.

But he was one of those restless, feverish souls who are always reaching out beyond the opportunities at hand for something bigger, something more spectacular, and—something more burdened with the element of chance.

Flood lied when he said he never took chances in business. If he turned a deal by the use of loaded dice, he was as likely as not the next day to drop the proceeds in some similar hazard.

He had been known to lose ten thousand dollars in a night at poker; to let go five times that amount in some risky stock operation; though it is true he made an occasional "killing" when luck was with him.

He was the sort of man who presents always the appearance of exceptional prosperity upon an income of doubtful bulk or permanence. But, like hundreds of others, he "got by" rather handsomely.

His chief worry was to determine from month to month if he could continue to get by. It was the natural tendency of his particular brand of human nature to conclude that as he always had done so, he always would.

Just now he was in one of his periods of anxiety. The stock market was so dull that his ordinary income from commissions had shrunk alarmingly. The steadiest customers of his office were no longer to be relied upon.

He knew that some of them would never come back, for they had gone broke in the general depression.

Money was so timid that it was no use trying to float some alluring new invention, some mine, or other wildcat scheme. The days when people "fell for" the enthusiasms of big newspaper advertising seemed to have passed.

Flood, under the convenient title of "fiscal agent," had known the time when by that method good money could be had almost as easily as picking it off trees. He sighed for the return of such an era.

Not big enough or sharp enough or bold enough to play the game with the inside crowd, Flood was a jackal, hovering about the edges of the battle, picking up dollars that escaped the attention of the lions of the jungle.

Being a jackal in Wall Street isn't such

a piffling business, when you come to think of it. Flood had, at times, found it amazingly satisfactory.

His dingy, untidy offices lent him an air of respectability and conservatism. Others of his kind hired expensive suites and bought striking furniture. Flood had heard that a patent medicine always sells better if it bears a dull, half-illegible label looking as if it had been printed on a hand-press in the time of Benjamin Franklin. The idea sounded good, and he applied it to his affairs.

The Triffin Building was only semi-modern; the elevator rattled and hopped in its grooves; the woodwork of dark walnut, or something resembling walnut, gave the building a back-number atmosphere. The rents were low, and as there was always talk of pulling it down to make room for a new sky-scraper the agent was never able to increase them.

Flood began to loosen up in the matter of drinking when the hot weather of July gave him the excuse of thirst. He liked beer, and persisted in believing that it was as harmless as water. The amount of alcohol in the beer, however, whipped into activity the old craving for a real stimulant at frequent intervals, and Flood began to substitute for the beer the more concentrated alcoholic beverages in which he could get the "kick" without the bulk.

At about this time, too, he decided that he had no further use for the services of Rocks Tracy. He was tired of the exercise and the other hardships of Rocks's prescribing; and he hated to pay the trainer's big fees.

Besides, Billy Wallace and others of the Jensen crowd were urging him to break his relations with Tracy. They realized that Flood was drinking so much that he was in constant danger of saying something of advantage to Rocks.

They were afraid of Tracy—the old fox. It would be just his meat to catch Flood off his guard and pump him. They were right in this surmise, for Rocks had never let slip a chance to worm information from Flood about the Smiling Swede.

Flood, fatuously convinced that Rocks could and would order Terry to "lay down" to Jensen, was childishly frank.

"Terry," said Tracy, "you ain't going to have no trouble wit' Jensen. I'm wise to everything he does, and he ain't getting into shape like he needs to. We've laid so low I guess he's kidded himself you're some kind of false alarm an' afraid to show yourself."

Rocks did not tell the young man, however, that he believed the real reason for Jensen's lax training methods to be the assurance that he would win the fight anyway. It gave Rocks a great deal of concern when he viewed it from certain angles.

"If Flood wasn't what he is, I wouldn't let him con himself no more," he told himself. "Them fellers is sure playin' him for a rank sucker. Half of every dollar he shells out for expenses goes into some guy's pocket—Billy Wallace's or Jensen's—wit' nothin' to show for it.

"If I'd 'a' let him put up for Terry, I'd could made three or four thousand dollars in graft—but who wants his dirty money? Not me! Let Jensen have it—he'll need it."

Whenever Rocks's conscience annoyed him too much he called up the picture of Terry as he had first seen him—a tramp, a bum, a derelict, made so by Flood's traitorous friendship. He recalled that day in Flood's office when the broker had first approached the subject of marked cards. Also he carried in his mind's eye the dusty, green box on a high shelf, the box with "Moscow Construction Company" lettered on the end.

"The dirty, sneaking cutthroat!" grumbled Rocks. "Nothing he's got coming to him is any too bad—and he's sure got it coming all right!"

To Flood the outcome of the battle in September became more and more vital. It was his sheet-anchor to windward. He wished fervently that he had been able to extract a flat-footed promise from Tracy; but it was not difficult to convince himself that self-interest was the powerful factor in the situation.

All the newspapers said that Jensen was looking better and better. The odds hovered between ten to eight and ten to seven. With the champ a pronounced favorite and Terry an almost unknown quantity, there was clearly only one way for Rocks to make a sure thing of the fight—and that was to let Jensen win.

Fifteen thousand dollars in the hand is not to be sneezed at—Flood couldn't see how Rocks could possibly choose to win at a financial sacrifice so considerable. Whenever he began to fancy any weakness in this proposition he went and took a drink.

Then the prospects looked as rosy as ever. With the proceeds of the big fight and the betting thereon he would be in excellent shape to tide over his difficulties until times were more favorable for his particular sort of operation.

Of course Tracy's estimate of Flood as a "boob" and a "fathead" was fairly accurate. Flood was a man carried away in the whirlwind of his own oblique avarice. There are types of mind which are unable to think in straight lines. Flood's was one of these.

If he had been an ordinary crook Tracy would have been sorry for him; but he was so frankly evil, wherever he thought himself in sympathetic company, that he blighted every merciful impulse in Rocks.

"Aw, let him get it; it's comin' to him," said the ex-pugilist to himself twenty times a day.

One morning at breakfast Flood said abruptly:

"I hear your old friend Gessler's shown up again."

"Yes," said Jeanne; "haven't you seen him?"

"No. Have you?"

"Why—yes. He's looking very well."

"I hear he's been reinstated at the Youngsters' and cuts quite a swath again. He'll be around here some evening full of highballs and sentiment, I suppose."

"Not highballs," said Jeanne.

"But sentiment's all right, eh?" Flood smiled; but his smile was not pleasant. "I don't like that fellow, Jeanne."

"You used to be one of his best friends! What's changed you?"

"Oh, his general—er—depravity, I guess. He's not just the sort of man for a girl like you to indorse, I should say."

Jeanne looked up and in her turn smiled. Her brother read her expression as plainly as if she had held up a lettered sign. It said:

"How virtuous we are, are we not!"

This smile of Jeanne's, which she used but seldom, always made him feel sheepish and futile and angry. He grunted something under his breath and stirred his coffee savagely.

"How does he get a living?" he asked, "I understood he was cleaned out. Now he shows up in good clothes at a regular club, and all that. What's he done—busted a bank or something?"

"How should I know?" asked Jeanne.

"Well, you've seen him. He used to be so mushy about you, I thought he might have told you. I thought once that you were quite impressed with him. Let's hope the symptoms don't recur."

Jeanne said nothing. Experience told her that when Anselm was irritated silence was much the better procedure.

"I've given up Tracy," said Flood. "He's a robber."

"But he did you so much good," she protested. "You've been looking so fit! Was he so very expensive?"

"Fifteen dollars an hour."

"Oh!" said Jeanne. And she had thought Tracy innocent!

"I guess you'd say 'Oh!' if it came out of your pocket. But never mind—I've had my money's worth."

"Doctors charge as much," Jeanne ventured, "and don't always do you so much good."

"They're robbers, too."

"Now that he's gotten you into such fine trim," advised Jeanne, "it ought to be easy for you to keep so. You know what did the mischief before, so you can avoid—"

"Who's preaching *now?*" cried Flood, quite forgetting that she had accused him only with her eyes.

"Nobody," said Jeanne demurely. She didn't want to begin an argument with her brother. She was beginning more and more to find him violent and coarse.

She went on with her breakfast, and Flood gave attention to his paper. When he arose he said:

"Of course you'll do as you like, but I wish you'd remember that I don't like Gessler. If you see him, please don't encourage him to come here. Don't think I'm trying to dictate; you're old enough to govern your own actions. But if you care to consider my wishes, just bear in mind that Gessler is a sort of aversion of mine. That's all."

When her brother was gone the girl sat a long time and considered. She was above all things honorable, sensitive to the slightest weight of obligation. She admired loyalty with a sort of worship.

To her Flood's dislike of Gessler was an exhibition of disloyalty which she could not understand. Flood hated Gessler because he had injured him, but Jeanne did not know this.

As long as she lived in her brother's house and accepted his support, however, there were plain obligations which she would not seek to shirk. If Gessler was not wanted there she would see that he did not come.

Flood had not gone so far as to forbid her acquaintance with the returned prodigal, and if he had forbidden it she would not have regarded the prohibition. But if a man's home is his castle he surely has a right to say who shall or shall not cross its threshold.

No matter how unjust the exclusion, the house was Anselm's, and his word was law.

But, because of her possessing love for Gessler, this unreasonable condemnation of the young man created a perceptible rift in the affectionate relation between Jeanne and her brother. If she insisted to herself that her regard for her brother was not of the bread-and-butter kind, she had to admit that if she were independent of him she could do very well without him. Of course any thought of independence was inseparably connected with her intended marriage to Terry.

The great love had simply begun to crowd out the little one. Inevitably she made comparisons, which unfailingly resulted in contrasts. Every time she met Anselm he appeared in his unforgivable status, the man who unjustly hated Gessler.

All her life she had tried to be fair in her judgments, to make charitable allowances, to analyze motives. She could find no basis upon which to rest an explanation of Flood's dislike.

Long ago she had discovered that her brother was far from perfect. She was too keen an observer to escape the knowledge that he did not always do the scrupulous thing, the ethical thing, in business. She gained this estimate of him from deduction rather than data. She simply knew what sort of man Anselm Flood was, and what that sort of man would be likely to do under certain circumstances.

Hitherto she had, she supposed, condoned his defects of character. Now she was to be made to suffer as a result of these defects.

She was surprised to learn that her affection for him was not of the kind that stands the strain.

This discovery at first disappointed and shocked her. She did not excuse herself on the ground that her brother was not a good man whom she would have been bound to respect. She thought that the ties of blood and of his kindness to her from childhood ought to be strong enough to hold her to him.

Her conscience would have been well salved if she had known that her brother had used her as a bait to catch a fish—young Gessler. That bit of treachery would have dissolved her obligation instantly had she known of it.

She was quite unhappy. She had somehow failed in a sacred duty—she had failed to make good with herself.

Flood was annoyed by the return of Gessler because he was afraid of him. He remembered how Gessler had looked on the night the young man had threatened to whip him because of his betrayal. What if Gessler, coming to the house to see Jeanne, should suddenly upon sight of Flood go into a great fit of rage like that which had possessed him before? Would Flood's life be safe? He didn't want any brain-storms to break in his library.

If the man whom he had wronged was once more prosperous, sober, and restored, what would he be likely to do to redress the injury? Flood could not imagine any one allowing so serious a matter to drop. Gessler had gone to pieces when he had learned that he was ruined, had dropped out of sight, probably too steeped in alcohol to realize the possibilities of reprisal.

Flood's gains through his betrayal of Gessler had long since been dissipated; but the misdemeanor had not been outlawed. The law had sometimes found a way to punish those who pursued the "construction company" avenue to fortune.

He resented Gessler's fondness for Jeanne. Now that he was back, apparently prosperous, Flood did not doubt that his attentions would be renewed. The idea made him furious because he more than half suspected that the young man would be quite welcome to the girl.

It was inevitable, he thought, that Gessler should make Jeanne one instrument of his reprisals; and the simplest way to begin that process would be to tell her of his shabby treatment at the hands of her brother.

Flood did not know to what extent his sister's acquaintance with Gessler had been

renewed, but he did what he could to put obstacles in the way.

Flood counted, somewhat shrewdly, upon the fine loyalty of Jeanne's disposition. She was high-spirited, independent, not always conventional. Since her father had been dead many years and Mrs. Flood had been an invalid almost as long, Jeanne had learned to think for herself and form her own opinions.

So he knew that if he stood up and unequivocally forbade Gessler the house, she would go on and do as she pleased.

He simply let her know that he did not approve of Gessler, and left the matter with her, relying upon her honor, her respect for his wishes, to guide her according to her conscience. He thought he had handled the matter rather tactfully. In this he was mistaken, for he had managed to offend his sister seriously; but in one respect he had reckoned accurately—she would observe the ethics of the situation and keep Gessler away from the house if she could.

CHAPTER XVIII.

What to Do With It?

"AIN'T you goin' to town?" asked Rocks one day, observing that Terry loitered over his luncheon. "This is your reg'lar afternoon off, hired man."

"No, I guess not. Nothing to go for to-day."

"Miss Jeanne gone away, or comin' out here instead, or somethin'?"

"Yes, something," replied Terry. "That's exactly it—something. Flood has heard that I'm back and told his sister I'm not a fit character for her to associate with."

"What d'you mean, not fit?" cried Rocks, tipping over a few dishes in his excitement. "You don't mean he knows—"

"Only that I'm back—as Gessler. He doesn't know the rest. He just bases his estimate of me on my former record. The girl is taking it a little seriously."

"Aw, she wouldn't pay no attention to that cheap skate," said Rocks confidently.

"Perhaps if she knew what we know about him she wouldn't. But you must remember that she doesn't, and that ever since she was a child he has taken care of her, taken care of her very handsomely, too."

"It's the only decent thing he ever did in his life," grumbled Tracy.

"No. He has a sick mother, for whom he has cared tenderly."

"Poor old thing," said Rocks stubbornly. "If she knew he'd stole the money he spends on her and the girl every drop o' medicine she took would choke her."

"And, Rocks," said Terry, "you realize, don't you, that it would be an awful thing for Jeanne to find out what a crook he is?"

"Do you think she's goin' through life and not find it out?" demanded Tracy.

"That is hardly possible," said Gessler. "But the point is, if she does find it out, it must be in some other way than through you or me, especially me."

"H-m!" said Tracy, and sat for a long time in silence.

"It is only reasonable and decent," went on Terry, "that so long as Miss Flood lives in her brother's house and accepts his bread and butter she should have some regard for his wishes."

"If they was anyways reasonable it would. But—"

"Even if they aren't reasonable."

"You ain't tryin' to tell me that she ain't goin' to see you no more? If that's the case I'll go down to Flood's office and croak him wit' me own hands. Then he'll be out of the way and she'll be free to do as she likes. But I wouldn't 'a' thought—"

"Don't get excited, Rocks," laughed Gessler. "She simply thinks that, as long as her brother feels as he does, it would be in better taste not to have me come to the house. It would look rather clandestine—"

"Who's he?"

"I mean it would be something underhand; she would be deceiving—"

"Haw, haw!" suddenly burst out Rocks. "That's what—oh, gee! Now I know what it means to swally a knot and—no, that ain't it— I got it—choke on a gnat and swally an elephant!"

Terry threw up his hands. There were some distinctions that he need never hope to make plain to Tracy.

"You're the limit, Rocksy," he said. "But you do see, don't you, that neither you nor I must be the means of her learning what sort of a man A. P. Flood is?"

"Oh, I got you there, all right," agreed Tracy cheerfully. "But if you can't go

to the house how are you goin' to see her? If you got to take her to them swell cafés and blow her to ice-cream and tea, you'll have to get into some business more profitable than trainin' for a fight. We're pretty low in the looker, boy."

"How low?"

"Well, after puttin' up your twenty-five hundred and mine for forfeit money I had a couple of thousand left. That was mine—I had it before I ever met you. But it's yours just the same, when it's needed. I've spent some of it on this farm. You know we eat a whole lot of grub, Terry—and good beef's thirty-five a pound."

"We'll get along well enough until after the fight."

"Sure. But we don't want to blow it all—I'm lookin' to get every dollar I can scrape together down in bets. Them odds is sure candy, boy. I don't know but they'll be as good as two to one at the ring-side."

"I hope so," said Terry. "Do you think it's safe to—er—advise anybody among my friends to put up a few hundred?" He smiled, awaiting Rocks's enthusiastic volley.

He loved to have Rocks rave about him. It gave him confidence and determination. But he had no intention of advising his friends to bet on the fight. When the subject was mentioned at the Youngsters' Club he dropped out of the conversation.

"So you ain't going to town to-day, then," said Rocks.

"What's the use? Miss Flood will drive out to-morrow, no doubt."

"Now, ain't that just like a swell-headed kid!" said Rocks. "Don't you think you're irresistible? Girl tells you to keep away, so you just sit back and let her come to you. Suppose she can't help herself."

"Well, can you blame her?" asked Terry, grinning.

"Listen to him, momma! Listen to him rave! I can see you crawlin' the whole twenty-five miles on your hands and knees if she only crooked a finger at you.

"But I'll tell you my advice, Mr. Terry-that's-turnin'-'em-away! You better toddle right along to town and meet the little boys at the club this afternoon, even if you don't see the girl. You know what orders is; you got to keep up the swell bluff. I'm here to see you do like Miss Jeanne says."

Terry sighed and went off to don his "city clothes," as Rocks called them. He much preferred his rough, farm overalls, or the freedom of gym shirt and trunks. At the club he would have to change again and go to call on a couple of maiden aunts. Then he would stroll back to the club, leave his top-hat and cutaway there, resuming the sack suit he wore traveling to and from town.

He would have rebelled at all this bothersome formality, but, as Rocks had said, it was undergone at Jeanne's suggestion. Very mysterious, it seemed, and futile; but she insisted.

"You simply must show yourself about town," she had said. "If you don't see the reason, you'll have to wait until I'm ready to tell you."

The one redeeming element in the situation was the zest Terry got out of fooling everybody—for a while at least. Rocks no longer went to town, for he didn't want to risk the discovery of the training-quarters.

The little garden behind the house at Greenpoint grew up to weeds. Reporters and detectives had long since ceased to watch it in the hope of trailing the crafty Tracy to his lair.

On the other hand, Terry could go and come with a degree of safety. In that part of town where he spent his time the likelihood of meeting any one who had seen him as Terry Mack was minimized. He had never sought acquaintances below Fourteenth Street, anyhow; always fading away promptly after a bout. And following the last match he had won, as will be remembered, the Tracy family had migrated promptly to Callayoga.

Gessler had never quite understood Jeanne Flood's abrupt acquiescence in his determination to go on and keep his fistic engagement with Jensen. Her explanation that she had been touched by Rocks Tracy's loyalty and willingness to sacrifice his own interest for the happiness of herself and Terry was all very well, as far as it went.

But how could she overcome so suddenly her abhorrence of his vulgar trade, or her dread of the social consequences when exposure should come? She had said she didn't care twopence for the dismay of her friends when she should marry a retired pugilist and go away with him into the big West to found a new home.

This fitted, in a way, the heroic mold in which he knew her character to be cast. Would he, however, foreseeing himself a social outcast, have the hardihood to take her at her word?

There had been cases of infatuation of foolish girls for inferiors, and so far as he knew the results had always been disastrous. He could not bring himself to class Jeanne Flood with these venturesome fly-aways.

He pondered and agonized no little upon the helplessness of his situation.

When he had insisted upon going on with the fight, against the opposition of the Tracys, believing that in doing so he was giving up hope irrevocably, so far as Jeanne Flood was concerned, he had made his sacrifice upon the altar of friendship as complete and final.

Jeanne had offered him her love; for a poignant half hour he had taken it into his hands, and then flung it back upon her with brutal force. At the time the idea that his renunciation was not final was farthest from his thoughts.

Then, through the somewhat blundering intervention of Rocks, he had found his romance restored, and if he would he could not deny its acceptance a second time.

He tried to keep out of his mind a humorous newspaper "strip" in which the cartoonist pictured daily the struggles of a hapless wight, obsessed with the desire for a will-o'-the-wisp. The desire fulfilled through a ludicrous series of acrobatics, the hero always ended hopelessly, confronted by the question:

"What are you gonna do with it?"

The comparison was odious, but it would not down. Gessler had, through amazing vicissitudes, obtained and retained Jeanne Flood's love. Now what was he going to do with it?

And through it all the girl remained serene as a May morning, apparently no less confident for the future than she would have been under the most commonplace of conditions. Whenever Gessler tried to bring up the subject she adroitly avoided discussion.

It was very mysterious and disturbing. The day of reckoning must come—the battle with the Smiling Swede would be as nothing compared with Gessler's self-combat when he should face the decision between his own happiness and Jeanne's. He could not assure himself that he would win; he had failed once. The second struggle would be ten times harder.

Obediently but reluctantly he took an afternoon train to the city. At the club he sat for a few minutes, cooling his throat with a tall glass of lemon and ginger ale, called for some unknown reason a "horse's neck."

A fellow member joined him.

"Hello, Ted," said the friend, young Abner Prentiss. "What brings you to this hot spot on a day like this? I thought you were one of the lucky dogs who don't have to come to town week-days, like us laboring men. What's that drink—oh, water-wagon stuff. How long you been on?"

"Over a year."

"Good stunt. Feel lots better, don't you? You're looking prime. Everybody ought to do it. Boy, get me a gin-ricky."

They chatted idly.

Prentiss opened an afternoon paper.

"Hello!" he cried. "Look at this, will you? Little Sally de Grande's eloped with one of her father's jockeys. Isn't that the limit? You remember her—nice little cutey—all fluffy ruffles and fuzzy talk. Good Heavens, what next?

"It's a shame—fellow like that ought to be horsewhipped and then lynched. Say, Ted, what would *you* do with such a varmint? Slow torture would be too good for him, wouldn't it? Poor little Sally—it's 'good night' for hers. Foolish kid!

"I was awfully interested in her once, but I said to myself, 'No! Even if she'd have you, it would be a shame—you haven't the means to get away with it.' Now I wish I had—she'd have been better off with me than she is now. Gad! I'd like to kill him!"

Gessler muttered something in quick agreement. There was the other man's point of view!

Still, if she really loved the jockey—No, it wouldn't do. Such things always turned out badly. And a jockey was as good as a prize-fighter any day.

He groaned inwardly and went off to dress—to carry out a cheap, sordid deception.

"I look like a man," he said, surveying his own prepossessing person in a tall mirror. He knew how to wear good clothes; he was certainly a stunning figure. He admitted that.

But inside the shell what sort of soul

had he? Was Jeanne Flood one of the "fluffy ruffles" kind, too, carried away by a pair of good shoulders and a set of regular, well-proportioned features?

"I've got big muscles," he thought, "but a pee-wee spirit. I'm not half a man. I hope that Jensen pushes my face through the back of my head! Wonder how she'd like me then? I think I'll hit his fist with my right eye and let him poke my teeth down my throat. Maybe she'll be so disgusted she'll stop caring for me."

But something told him that Jeanne would go on loving him if he were crippled and blinded for life, and somehow he couldn't dodge the comfort in the thought.

CHAPTER XIX.

How Whisky Varnished the Plain Truth.

THE serene Miss Flood went her calm way through the closing days of summer with none of the misgivings concerning her future that agitated and harassed Gessler.

She cared for the little invalid mother, ordered the affairs of her brother's household, and maintained a friendly attitude toward that increasingly irritable relative.

It disturbed her to see that he was once more drinking excessively; he had lost much of the cultivated wholesomeness of appearance resulting from his training under Tracy. Jeanne saw that he was often distrait and careworn, with eyes that were too wide open, and it was evident that his potations were directed to the end of antidoting an unquiet mind.

Gessler's name was seldom mentioned, but if anything brought it to Flood's attention he immediately heaped a torrent of abuse upon the young man's head.

Jeanne was quite at a loss to account for so vicious a dislike. She did not know it, but Gessler's return had revived a deal of discussion, and Flood believed that Gessler was at the bottom of it.

People seemed to know that he had been in some way responsible for Gessler's misfortunes. No one pretended to guess the explanation of his apparent prosperity, but they were giving him endless credit for his steady ways and excellent appearance.

All this irritated Flood to frenzy. Moreover, he believed that the matter would culminate in some legal action, and while he had ceased to fear any physical attack from Gessler, whom he had not seen, he was in constant dread that the blow might fall in some unexpected, crushing way.

He dreamed of jails and judges, and often awoke in the hours of darkness to seek the soothing effect of whisky.

Business affairs were not improving. His one hope lay in the outcome of the Jensen-Mack battle, now so near that it occupied column after column of sporting-page space.

And ever grew the mystery of Silent Terry's hidden headquarters.

Rocks Tracy appeared out of nowhere, met those commissioned to perfect the last business details of the contest, and eluded the pursuing newspaper men who vainly clamored for information. All he would say was that his man was in absolutely perfect condition, and would be on hand to keep his engagement, down to weight, and eager for combat.

"And when he does show up," he said tantalizingly, "you guys are going to get the surprise of your life."

One visit he did make before returning to Bascom's farm, and that was in the interest of conscience. He called upon Anselm Flood.

Tracy had worried all summer about Flood's self-deception. He hated Flood as badly as ever, but as his dislike increased, so increased his admiration for the man's lovely sister.

He wanted to "get" Flood, for he could never lose sight for a moment of the injury done his protége.

But as the summer waned, he found that what had been in contemplation a delicious morsel, now stuck grievously in his throat and grew unbearably bitter upon his tongue. He couldn't bring himself to exact the deserved penalty from one of Jeanne's blood.

What if Terry and momma knew? They would condemn him utterly — momma would never speak to him again. Terry was a real one; if he were content to let Flood off, why should he, Tracy, take it upon himself to provide a gratuitous revenge?

Anyhow, he was going to bet every available penny upon the battle, and he should win. He would be no whit poorer by undeceiving Flood.

He determined to spit out the now unpalatable morsel.

Flood, as luck would have it, was in his office that afternoon. Nowadays he did not spend much time there—it was too far from the source of alcoholic supply.

But some small, fortuitous demand of commerce had kept him after his usual time of leaving. His morose eye lighted dully in greeting.

"H'lo, Rocksy, ol' sport," he said a little thickly. "Glad to see you." Tracy saw that he was already clouded with drink.

"Thanks," said Rocks. "Is that little private room of yours workin' this afternoon?"

"Betcher life," said Flood. "'S workin' any time i's needed. C'm'on in." He led the way, shut the door behind his caller, and sat down.

"Now spit 'er out," he invited.

"I just called to find out," began Rocks, "if you got a notion that we was goin' to throw this fight to Jensen?"

"F' the love o' Mike, wha' kind of question's that t' ask me?" demanded Flood.

"Well," declared Tracy, untruthfully, "I heard something on the street that made me think maybe you'd let slip some such dope."

"Why, you darn fool, o' course I didn't!"

As a matter of fact, Flood had assured Jensen that such an arrangement had been perfected; and Jensen had judiciously spread the tip among his immediate followers. Thus one had told another, in secret of course, until a good many who were supposed to be "in the know" believed it, in a doubting way.

But the general public, interested in such things, had not yet come by the knowledge, and would not have believed it if it had. Such rumors always circulate freely, and are substantially discounted."

The thing had not reached Tracy's ears; he was merely taking a long shot, and a pretty safe one.

"Look here, Rocks," said Flood; "what you driving at? You goin' to double-cross me, eh?"

"You bet I ain't," replied Rocks with spirit. "I want you to tell me what you understood, that's all. That's what I came here for, see?"

"I cer'nly understood that you were goin' t' throw the fight, tha's what I understood. Ain't you?"

"I never told you so," declared Tracy righteously.

"Well, by gad, you jus' same's told me! You said that on the night Jensen licked Terry Mack you were comin' 'round 'n' c'lect fifteen thousan' cold dollars; 'n' I 'greed to give it to you."

"Why, Mr. Flood," said Tracy, in pained surprise, "ain't you got no sense o' humor? That was my little joke. Of course I'd be glad to have you hand me fifteen thousand in case Terry loses; but you ain't goin' to have no chance to do it, 'cause he's goin' to win, see?"

Flood looked dumbly at Rocks, groping for an idea. It came to him with much friction.

"Wha's your lay, Tracy?" he demanded. "More money? Want to boost the ante, eh? Well, you can' do it. The trade is made—fifteen thousan' if Jensen wins, an' there wasn't any joke about it."

"Nothin' doin'," said Rocks.

Liquor plays strange tricks. Anselm Flood threw back his head and roared with laughter.

"Why, you ol' foxy rooster," he chuckled, tears of merriment rolling down his face; "you can't give me any bunk like that. You run along now, 'n' be a good ol' Rocksy. Fifteen thousan' dollars is awful lot o' money, m' boy, awful lot. It 'll be all ready for you, too; all done up in nice, green bundles, with rubber bands 'round 'em.

"Go 'long now, Rocksy, 'n' sell y'r papers. Don' come here 'n' try to kid y'r uncle. Nothin' doin' in that line to-day."

"I warned you," said Tracy. He saw plainly that the man was far from rational.

"Tell y' what I'll do," said Flood. "You're good ol' scout, Rocks; restored m' health, cured m' drinkin' booze, built up m' liver, 'n' all that sorter thing. Now, we'll just raise the ante twenty-five hundred, see, f'r ol' time's sake. I make it seventeen thousand five hund'd dollars."

"Listen," roared Rocks, seeking by volume of sound to penetrate Flood's mired intelligence, as one sometimes shouts in the ear of a blinking alien; "listen, you sot! Terry *don't* lay down, I tell you; he *don't lay down*—not for any amount—not for a million! Get that?"

"I get you, Rocks, I get you," grinned the drunkard. "Seventeen thousan' five hund'd, seventeen thousan' five hund'd. Run along now, 'n' be good ol' Rocksy."

Tracy saw it was no use. He made his way hastily out of the dingy Flood office, leaving its proprietor sitting there chuckling.

Presently Flood's head tipped over on the desk and he slept noisily. A considerate employee closed the door of the little private office.

At the end of several hours Flood awoke. He had drunk tremendously that day, whisky after whisky, and had returned to his office before the liquor had made its full effect felt. In the parlance of the bibulous, his drinks had "bunched on him."

He tried to remember what had happened just previous to his nap. He felt unusually ill; his system clamored for more whisky.

Suddenly a little glimmer came back. Rocks Tracy had called.

What did he want? Money? Something about the fight?

Ah, that was it. Tracy had raised the price, hadn't he? He remembered something about "seventeen thousand, five hundred dollars."

"I guess that's what I did—he made a monkey of me, because I was a little tight," he thought. "Dirty trick, that, to take advantage of me. Well, it can't be helped. It'll be worth it, anyhow. Probably I'm a fool to pay anything; Jensen will win without any trouble. This mysterious phenomenon's a false alarm. I was a fool. Jensen's sure to win; why worry?"

He picked up his hat from the floor, brushed it blunderingly, and sought the outer office. It was dark, for he had slept long beyond closing hour.

He went along the hall and rang for the elevator, which came up, piloted by a sleepy watchman.

"Been workin' late?" asked the man.

"Sure," said Flood. "Awful busy day to-day. How'd the Giants make out?"

"Pirates beat 'em to-day—six to four. I was to the game—say, it was a peach. Meyers—"

"Good night," said Flood, and hustled for the nearest café.

"Seventeen thousand, five hundred," he mused. "That's a lot of money. And Jensen 'll win, anyhow."

He stopped, struck with a bright, new thought. It was a wonder this had never occurred to him before.

"That's the stuff—if Jensen wins I'll tell Tracy he did it by straight fightin'—that lets me out of paying him. That's the way to handle a crook. How's he going to help himself?"

Flood laughed, a nasty, stained leer. Coming to a saloon he went in and ordered a drink.

He knew how to handle a crook like Rocks Tracy. Fifteen dollars an hour, eh? He'd even matters up in fine style!

As he stood with his foot on the rail, his drink poised between bar and lip, a disquieting, sneaking filament of recollection throbbed in the back of his muddled brain. It was something Rocks had said —"Not for a million."

"Lord!" he thought. "That was before we fixed it up!"

He drained his glass and ordered another. He felt pretty rocky; he would stay down-town and take a Turkish bath.

CHAPTER XX.

"Gessler Is the Man!"

"IT'S the most surprising and unconventional invitation I ever got in my life," remarked Wingo Bruitte to his friend Ashbey Rieger. "It sounds like rather a lark, though. Thunder! There's no harm in it. Wish other girls were as original as Jeanne Flood. She's a bird!"

"I'm darned glad I'm included," said Rieger. "I wouldn't miss it; kind of an oasis in the desert, a dinner at this time of year."

"Yes, but consider the sort of dinner it is—given by a perfectly charming girl, and not another darned girl invited. Ten handsome, fascinating bachelors—ten, count 'em—and not a skirt!"

"Amazing!" agreed Rieger. "And every one of us sworn to secrecy. Let's look at the list—mine's in my other clothes."

Together they scanned the names.

"Who's Tabner?" asked Rieger.

"Search me."

"And Veldtman?"

"Oh, Veldtman? I know him. He's a newspaper guy, one of the *Trumpet's* big sporting fellows, I believe. Reports all the fights and things. I've met him; sort of a rough citizen, but pretty good chap."

"Funny, isn't it? What do you sup-

pose he's there for? Not to write the thing up, eh?"

"Sillee awss!" jeered Bruitte. "Of course not. She just wants somebody interesting there. He'll be lonesome, in that crowd."

"Maybe Tabner's another newspaper chap."

"Right-o!" cried Bruitte. "He *is;* only he's an artist, not a writer. He does those horrible little dogs—you know."

"Sure, sure," said Rieger. "I have you, Stephen, I have you. Hello, here's Pound. Oh, Pound; your name's on the list, I see."

"Most assuredly," confirmed Pound. "No home complete without me. I suppose you refer to Miss Flood's little affair to-morrow night."

"Hush, churl," warned Rieger. "The very walls have ears. This is a dead secret."

"I know it. Didn't she make me swear my life away before she'd even tell me what it was all about?"

"I only hope that beastly brother of hers isn't included," said Rieger.

"He isn't on the list, he isn't on the list," chanted Bruitte and Pound, in chorus. "By the way," asked Pound, "why do you suppose iss it der newspaper guys?"

"That's the second big mystery of the whole affair. And the first is, where are the other girls and one demon chaperon?"

"Trust Jeanne Flood to put over a new one," said Rieger. "Well, brothers of the sacred pie-knife, I have a living to get, meager though it may be—a little thing, but mine own. Who's going to plunge boldly into the subway with me?"

"Me," said Pound. "I will went with thee. Good-by, Wingo. See you on the big night."

It was indeed an unusual function that Jeanne Flood had planned. Her brother was hardly ever at home in the evenings nowadays, and she knew that he had a stag dinner on for this particular night. So she was doubly sure that he would not be likely to mar the occasion.

Had his attitude toward Gessler been a friendly one, he would certainly have been included, although he was by some years the senior of any of the guests she had bidden.

Knowing her friendliness for Gessler, the men who found their lucky names upon her list noted with surprise that his was missing. But this omission was one of the mysterious elements in a remarkable affair.

The guests were all on hand in ample season; none wanted to risk any possible development of interest. The acceptances had been wistful in their eagerness.

Of the ten at least six had been at one time or another deeply in love with Jeanne. This was a pretty fair average, considering that the two newspaper men were strangers, invited for a purpose.

"Mr. Tabner," said Tommy Pound, "there isn't a man in New York I'd rather know than you. Say, where in the name of journalism do you get all your ideas—think 'em up out of your own bean? You're a wonder. I hear you get more salary than President Wilson."

"Well, he *gets* his," said Tabner.

He was a sad-eyed, bashful young man, with a reddish nose, and a strong smell of cloves. Later it developed that he could tell a story so funny that his hearers hung onto the rungs of their chairs and howled; whereupon Tabner seemed about to cry.

He needed a hair-cut, and his dress-suit refused to hobnob with his collar; but the young men all voted him a prince.

Veldtman, the other newspaper man, believed himself cut out for society by a lavish Providence. He greeted every one by his last name, without troubling to use any prefix. Thrusting out a warm, nervous hand, he said genially:

"H'are yuh, Bruitte? H'are yuh, Pound? H'are yuh, Gaines? Glad tusseeyuh, glad tusseeyuh."

"Little bright-eyes is some mixer, eh?" whispered McAlister to Davis, behind his hand. "Where 'd she get these two birds, anyway? What is this to be, an evening with our best artistic and literary talent? Veldtman is a bear in newspaper circles. I wonder where he keeps his chin."

Veldtman's chin was the only backward thing about him. He was as brash as Tabner was retiring. His ears stood off at right angles from an extraordinarily bald head; but his face was lighted by a pair of flashing black eyes, which left no doubt that his intelligence far outstripped his physical attractions.

He was well acquainted with every man

"That's right, Frank," he said. "Tell 'em about the time you slept with General Nogi."

This was Tabner's attempt to relieve what might become an embarrassing situation.

Veldtman hesitated.

"Why, Mr. Veldtman," said Jeanne smoothly, "you needn't feel that way. I've been selfish; you haven't been doing any monopolizing; it was I. Please go on."

Veldtman, reassured, shot a glance of reproach at the offending Gaines, and proceeded hesitantly:

"Well, you see, Jimmie Ryan, staff photographer for *Kornoer's Weekly*, put the idea into my head. Clever fellow, Ryan. Always doing something nice for some newspaper chap who was up against it for a story. He said— Oh, come now; this isn't much of a story. Don't let me do all the talking."

This time his embarrassment impressed everybody as quite sincere, and they all liked him the better for it.

"Go on, go on," they chorused.

So Veldtman had gone on and on, telling one story after another.

"This lop-eared hound has got us all looking like two-spots," whispered Abner Prentiss, a little enviously.

"Shut up," muttered Gaines. "He's immense—when he forgets the la-de-da-boy manner. You're jealous; so am I. I've got too much good taste to show it, though."

"Yet," Jeanne Flood was saying, "after being a war correspondent, and all that, you're a sporting-writer now. How did that happen?"

"Well, we newspaper men are more or less nutty—you know, erratic, I suppose. And then there are always periodic shake-ups in every office, and sometimes a chap finds that inclination and necessity have—er—sued each other for separate maintenance, so to speak. In a case like that, necessity gets the custody of the minor child; you know, where the pay-envelope is, the heart is also, as Shakespeare, or Robert W. Chambers, or some one of those literary fellows, has said."

"Don't you consider newspaper work literary?" asked Jeanne.

"Are Tab's dogs art?" he countered.

"Sure they're art," came the sad voice from the foot of the board. "I showed 'em to Howard Pyle once, and he told me he had never done anything like 'em in his life."

"Would you believe," said Veldtman solemnly, "that I once had a poem about orchids published in a real magazine? It was the day after the Jeffries-Fitzsimmons fight.

"I got up that morning and looked over my stuff in the paper—I thought it was immense—the best fight story ever written. And then the mail-man brought my copy of the magazine.

"My poem was in it—following an article on 'The Ethics of Pragmatism,' or something like that. I read the poem through twice, and then I cried for the first time since I was twelve years old."

"Oh, Mr. Veldtman, did you ever meet Jeffries?" said Jeanne.

"Would you think any the better of me if I said 'yes,' Miss Flood? I cannot tell a lie—I know him like a brother. James, show Mr. Veldtman his hat."

Jeanne laughed with the rest.

"I suppose you know lots of—pugilists?"

"Forgive me, Miss Flood, I didn't know any better—I guess I've met them all."

"Do you know Ole Jensen?" cried Pound eagerly. "And is he going to win?"

"I know Ole Jensen. I don't know whether he is going to win or not. I might make a guess if I could find the mysterious Terry Mack.

"I didn't tell the truth when I said I knew 'em all; there's one I don't know, Silent Terry. Nobody seems to know him, and every sporting editor in town is offering to fire his whole staff because nobody can get to him.

"But I guess I've said enough about prize-fights—I beg your pardon, Miss Flood. It isn't a very nice subject, is it?

"Now about that poem in the magazine. Did any of you gentlemen ever happen to write any poetry? Mine was written in rectangular pentameter, I think. It was called—"

"Mr. Veldtman," said Jeanne, "don't think me rude, but before we go back to the subject of literature, there's something I'd like to say."

"Oh, by all means. Forgive me for—"

"Would you like to meet this Mr. Terry Mack?" she asked.

All around the table one could hear

a little gasp of surprise. Veldtman, his brain still adjusted to the atmosphere of light banter, launched his reply:

"Like it? Why, I'd give ten years' sal—" Then he stopped in mid-sentence, his jaw sagging, his luminous eyes fixed upon Jeanne Flood's face. In her own lurked the look of a marksman who, having fired at a target, stands poised to calculate the effect of his shot.

"Great Scott!" said Veldtman. "What do you mean?"

Jeanne settled back in her chair, laughing a little nervously.

"I was rather unfair, I'm afraid. Please, Mr. Veldtman, and you, too, Mr. Tabner, why do you suppose I asked you to come here to-night? I've enjoyed having you, and so have my friends. But it must have seemed very strange, the whole thing. I have felt like apologizing to you both, all the evening."

"I'm sure you don't owe us any apology, after the pleasant way you've entertained us, Miss Flood. We'll be very glad to do anything to show—"

He stopped. Long schooling had made him suspicious. People were always trying to "work" the newspapers for free space.

The invitation had come to Tabner and himself in a way that had aroused this suspicion. He had been of a mind to decline, fearing to be let into some difficult situation from which he should extricate himself only at the expense of a possible enmity. But something tantalizing in the circumstance had lured him.

People sometimes credit newspaper men with a sort of sixth sense, and if Veldtman had a shred of such a thing, it had served him well. He had persuaded Tabner to accept, also, and to subscribe, as he had done, to the conditions of secrecy attaching to the affair.

Jeanne Flood analyzed Veldtman's humor almost as accurately as if she had peeped through a skylight into the laboratory of his thoughts.

"You were both very kind to come," she said. "I know how you felt about it, though you didn't say so. The whole affair must seem to you so—unusual, so bizarre! I don't know what you are thinking of me. I'm a little afraid of what everybody here may think, although these gentlemen have been my friends for a great, great many years."

She beamed bewitchingly upon the eight.

"If they hadn't been such good, dear old friends of mine I probably couldn't have drawn them here with horses. You, Mr. Tabner and Mr. Veldtman, haven't even the assurance that goes with friendship; you didn't know me, nor what I wanted. It was most natural for you to suspect my motives.

"That is why I am so grateful to you; and while I feel as if I can do you a favor, I am quite in doubt as to which side the obligation will rest. Do you see what I mean?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly," said Veldtman.

He didn't see at all. The more she talked the dizzier he felt himself getting. Tabner, at the table's foot, maintained his unbroken aspect of wo.

"But if I owe an explanation to anybody, it must include you all, of course, every one as much as another. Mr. Veldtman and Mr. Tabner have come here as strangers, but they have shown a spirit that puts them on the same basis as the rest of you."

"Don't be too sure," warned Veldtman hastily. "Just remember that we are here quite frankly in our own—or our paper's—interest."

"That is very honest and fair of you, Mr. Veldtman," said Jeanne. "I am glad you said it. Now if any of you wish more coffee—and you'll have a cigarette, won't you, Tommy? Just get some more matches from that box on the mantel; I've sent the maids out.

"Please be as comfortable as you can, and as patient. I think you won't find what I'm going to tell you altogether uninteresting."

She paused and looked about, solicitous for the physical well-being of all her guests. They shuffled their chairs, and struck matches, and took expectant sips from their tall coffee-glasses.

"I have a little story to tell," began Jeanne, "if you want to hear it. It concerns a friend of everybody here, I'm sure. The reason—or one reason—why I tell this story is that he would never tell it for himself.

"Two years ago, or a little more, one of the boys whom I had known a long time, a member of a fine old family, and of at least one rather select club, disappeared."

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"Two years ago, or a little more, one of the boys whom I had known a long time, a member of a fine old family, and of at least one rather select club, disappeared."

"I know—" began young Gaines.

"Sh!" warned Tommy Pound, nudging him violently.

"I am not defending what he did, or the manner of his life before he went away. He was no better or worse than—than—"

"Than the rest of us," said the irrepressible Gaines.

"Perhaps not," went on Miss Flood. "You boys know more about that than I do. But he suffered a very great misfortune. Just how such a blow would affect one of you would be a matter of individual temperament, no doubt.

"But this man was exceedingly sensitive, and because he lost his money through the deceit and treachery of some one man whom he considered his friend—I have no idea who the friend was—he was convinced that all friendship had lost its significance. It destroyed his faith in people.

"His view was too extreme, of course. But it *was* his view, and he could not help it, any more than any of us can help our personal opinions."

"But don't you think—" put in Gaines.

"If you open your fool head again," hissed Pound, "I'll brain you."

Gaines subsided sullenly.

"A little while ago," said Jeanne, unruffled by this evident by-play, "the man came back. That is, he came back in his old identity and person. But he is not, really, the same man at all. He is a different and better man. He has gone through fire—yes, he has gone through—hell. I can't think of any other way to describe his experience.

"Men do not very often survive such things; and when they do, they are changed. Somehow a part of them is charred and crumbled away; usually, I think, it is the mean and weak things in their character that have been consumed.

"To say that they 'rise from the ashes of their dead selves' is an overworked figure, but concrete examples give old sayings new significance and freshness."

Miss Flood paused, flushing, a little distressed. Across her mind floated the fear that she was being pedantic, "preachy."

The faces of those who listened swam in a faint mist. Only the eager, luminous eyes of Veldtman seemed to shine at her with an encouraging, alert sympathy. This stranger, this queer gargoyle of a man, with his deep, wide knowledge of life, understood.

She breathed, and went on:

"This friend of ours has a problem facing him which he cannot solve. He will do his best, has already done his best. But the answer he has chosen does not now satisfy him.

"He is distressed and beleaguered by circumstances which he cannot control. Yet he is going on bravely, doing what seems right, no matter what it costs; and no matter how bitter the price, he will face it.

"This is the kind of man he has become, because he has been through fire.

"Now the thing that is driving him on, that is sustaining the better self which he has developed, is loyalty. The disloyalty that sent him staggering almost to his death has taught him the wonder of loyalty.

"He is meeting an obligation that seems to him greater than any duty he owes his own interest, his own desires, his own standing in his world. He sees himself facing a tremendous sacrifice, and he is facing it bravely and cheerfully.

"I am only a girl, probably quite an inadequate, futile creature to undertake that this man's sacrifices shall bring him something besides unending misery, perhaps disgrace. To do what I am doing to-night requires more courage than—well, modesty. But there was no one else to do it, no one else who understands so well as I understand what he is facing.

"You see I am frank, painfully frank with you."

Jeanne had intended not to blush. In planning her campaign she had said to herself, 'Jeanne, for goodness' sake, don't blush!"

With this self-prohibition in mind, she now proceeded to violate it, completely, and beautifully, and—so thought her hearers—most appealingly. If she had known how effective it would be, she would have planned it so.

"I asked you to come here to consider a scheme with me. Everybody here can help; and any one here can, if he likes, upset the whole campaign, so that what I am saying will be quite foolishly useless."

"We're with you, we're with you," said Gaines a little huskily. Pound did not check him, but prepared to do so if neces-

sary. He felt a little shaken, himself: for he was one of the six.

"What I have been trying to say, what I have been leading up to," said Jeanne, with recovered or, at least, cleverly simulated composure, "is this: Theodore Gessler is Terry Mack—the pugilist!"

To describe what words were used, what expressions of countenance, what tones of voice, what gestures; to register ten different kinds of astonishment, would be entirely impossible.

Upon the eight who knew Gessler well, the effect was perhaps a degree more chaotic than upon the two newspaper men, who could only guess the significance of the double identity.

When the general babel of excited comment had become less deafening, Veldtman asked:

"Do you mean to say that this friend of yours, this Mr. Gessler, has been circulating about New York most of the summer? Right under our noses? Well, I'll be—I'll wait to say what I'll be until I get outside."

Followed, in due course, the entire story, the detailed account of Gessler's fall, of his meeting with Rocks Tracy, of his inviolable friendship for the veteran fighter and his wife and child.

"And now, what are we going to do about it?" asked Miss Flood. "That is, what are *you* going to do about it? I think I've gone about as far as I can. But you know what is staring Theodore Gessler in the face; social ostracism, banishment from his own kind, disgrace. Do you want that to happen to such a man?"

"We do *not*," remarked Wingo Bruitte succinctly, "and we're not going to. Are we or are we not?"

"We *are* not!" chorused the company, ten voices strong.

"So you see," said Jeanne, turning demurely to Veldtman, "when I asked you to come here I was a little selfish, after all. I am just one of those eternal people who pester newspaper men to grind their axes for them.

"Remember, dear friends," warned Jeanne, "whatever you do must be done in a hurry. And it must be done secretly, absolutely. Perhaps, if Mr. Veldtman and Mr. Tabner will stay just a few minutes longer, I can give them a little more information that they would like."

The two newspaper men bade the others good night, in the amiable freemasonry of a common secret and a common cause.

"Whenever you chaps can find time to come up town to lunch," said Bruitte cordially, "why—well, make it to-morrow, at the Youngsters'."

"Mr. Gessler is in training with Mr. Tracy," said Jeanne, when only Veldtman and Tabner remained, "at Bascom's farm. It is twenty-five miles from Forty-Second Street, by motor or train. I will telephone Mr. Tracy that you are coming, and if you want to interview—"

"Miss Flood," said Tabner, "I haven't talked as much as Veldt this evening. I haven't had much chance, even if I'd wished to. But I want to make the wisest and truest remark that's been made so far. And if my gabby friend here can beat it, he's welcome to try." He paused.

"Well?" said Jeanne.

"You're the most wonderful girl that ever lived; and that, as Lew Fields would say, is from the heart out."

CHAPTER XXI.

Rocks Tracy Phones.

THE "beat" scored by the *Morning Trumpet*, two days before the Jensen-Mack argument, set that enterprising newspaper's circulation at a mark well above its previous sensational record.

Likewise, it caused consternation among the employees of rival journals, and added measurably to the "army of the unemployed," or to that "arm of the service" recruited from newspaper circles.

City and sporting editors tore their hair, and assignments flew thick and fast. A flying squadron bore down upon Bascom's farm, in the hope of gleaning whatever might be left of news interest in that quarter.

But the sortie was too late. Bascom's farm was deserted, the house-doors locked, and the big swinging portals of the barn secured by a stout oak bar.

Foraging parties scoured the country round with scant results. All they could find among the natives was a slender grist of rumors and hearsay.

One farmer testified that he had ketched some fellers hammerin' each other in Bascom's barn 'bout two weeks ago; but 't 'adn't be'n none o' his business. There 'd be'n a fam'ly livin' there—oh, sure! Nice

folks, he guessed. Two men and a lady and a little fat gal. They was good farmers, too.

A second squad at the same time surrounded the Tracy estate at Greenpoint, with even less satisfactory results. No one, the neighbors said, had lived there all summer. There had been a light in the window one or two nights; probably Mr. Tracy looking after things a bit, but he hadn't stayed.

The *Trumpet's* story was graphic and detailed. The illustrations were especially good. They showed Tracy and his protége piling rocks, and cutting corn, and gathering apples. They pictured a practise bout between Terry and his trainer.

In these sketches, oddly enough, the face of the aspirant for championship honors happened always to be "upstage."

Terry, obedient and puzzled, boxed with Rocks in an obscure loft on a side-street.

"You lay low now, boy," said Rocks. "No more willying for yours at that club up-town. I'm 'fraid you might git hold of a cigaroot."

There was a good deal of excitement among the fashionable haunts of well-to-do young, middle-aged, and old men above Forty-Second Street. Never had a prize-fight been given so much attention in that quarter.

At least eight men seemed, for some reason, wildly interested in the affair, and desperately anxious to communicate their enthusiasm to their friends. The newspapers said that several sections, close to the ringside, had been secured for the "swell crowd."

Old fight followers, veteran "fans" of the manly art, complained bitterly at their inability to secure front seats. There was nothing left for them.

Rumor implied that the management had made more than a legitimate profit by these reservations.

This influx of the select element had a distinct effect upon the odds, for it became apparent that there would be liberal quantities of up-town money in sight, and most of it indorsed the Mackian faction. On the night of the affair, ten to nine on Jensen was the prevailing ratio.

Rocks Tracy and his friends had most of their money down at a more advantageous figure—some of it at odds as favorable as one to two.

Anselm Flood, committed inextricably, hesitated no longer to advise everybody with whom he discussed the fight to bet freely at almost any odds. He was beside himself with excitement, and kept continually saturated with liquor.

He had not been at home for several days or nights, and Jeanne had her anxiety for his well-being added to the burdens of anticipation. It was the grievous fly in the ointment of her high hopes. She needed every ounce of strength to preserve her self-control.

She hardly dared spend her usual portion of time with her mother, lest her agitation in some subtle way communicate itself with ill effects to the invalid.

But through it all one thought vibrated in her brain. She had saved her chance—the chance she had prayed for.

No matter what happened, she had done her best. Come what would, she would face the issue bravely, defiantly, if need be.

She had stood by her chosen man, like the stern women of old. She felt as if the strong blood of an earlier and barbarous day welled in her veins, and she gloried in her faith.

No woman ever sent husband or son forth to battle in a righteous cause more proudly than Jeanne Flood sent Gessler out to wage a fight unsocial and taboo.

She smiled grimly as she contemplated the anomaly, the paradox of her position.

On the day of the battle she motored far into the autumn country that lay, tawny-warm, above the Bronx. She could not tell what towns she passed, what roads she threaded. She only knew that the breeze soothed her, that the swift-sliding panorama of wood and field calmed and comforted her.

There were farms and pastures and orchards, old villas nestling in thick trees. Children played and women called, men worked in the wide stretches of farmland.

Everywhere was peace and quiet and industry; and in her heart hot concentration upon a scene of strife.

In her mind's eye she saw close-set, circled rows of fiercely eager faces, upturned to a strong light. And in the center upon a tall platform, girt with stanchioned ropes, two men struggled.

One was dark, tawny-brown from the summer sun, lean, agile, and keen as a

panther. The other, fair-haired, a viking for strength and fierceness, a very berserk, bulky, ponderous, perhaps, but withal crafty, heavily lithe, and no whit less savage than his opponent.

The picture may not be accurate in detail, but it was as real to her as if she had looked upon a hundred like scenes. It was so vivid that it made her catch her breath, a little fluttering agitating her breast.

And then she pulled herself back to the peaceful landscape from which she had strayed, back in time to save the life of a phlegmatic, straying cow that wabbled foolishly as it barred the way.

"Purt' nigh grazed her that time, miss," called the owner cheerfully. "Guess you know how to handle that dingus. Better go slow—the's a schoolhouse ahead—it's 'bout recess time, tew!"

She ended her ride and sent her car back to the garage. There was nothing to do but wait—wait—wait.

She nibbled at her tasteless supper, fidgeting and restless in the big, lonely dining-room. She wished her brother were there for company's sake; but no, he would be at the fight. The thought of him gave her a pang of regret. He would have been drinking. She hoped he would come home that night; perhaps he would tell her, against her simulated distaste, about the fight.

Besides, his mother had been asking for him, and she had been forced to make such evasive reply as she could lay tongue to: business was very demanding; Anselm was so driven at the office.

Mrs. Flood settled for rest, bidding her daughter a gentle good night, and Jeanne fled, relieved, to her own room.

But the relief was only momentary. Back again came the harassing, torturing fears, the stimulating hopes, the poignant misgivings. There was nothing certain in life, and here was a thing upon which men wagered, in proof of its uncertainty, as upon the turn of a wheel.

The suspense was unbearable, yet she must bear it. Terry must win; the outcome must be as she had willed.

Her faith in him buoyed her up with a kind of glorified force; but the element of chance, the possibility of accident, the unreckoned treachery of a venal referee—ah, Heaven! If it were only ended, anything, even defeat, would be welcome!

But defeat should not come; she had willed it otherwise! She set herself in an attitude of defiance, projecting conscious waves of hope and faith and victory; and then, twisted and sobbing, dropped upon her knees and prayed; incongruously, but none the less fervently, she prayed.

And in the hall a bell jingled, a purring, silvery trill. She was at the telephone before the final, component note of its tinkling summons.

"Yes, yes," she called. "Who—yes, this is Miss Flood. Yes, I'll hold it."

She trembled and swayed, waiting. In her ear sounded the jangling thud of a dropped coin.

"Hello, hello. This is Miss Flood—yes, this is Miss Jeanne. Yes, Rocks, what—"

CHAPTER XXII.

The End of the Fight.

A DESCRIPTION of a fight is not a nice thing, any more than is the thing described.

Elements of the picturesque are there, to be sure. The packed amphitheater of faces, lustful of excitement; the brilliant, glaring white of the ring, dazzling with the necessary light for moving pictures; the swollen officials, dignified as deacons; the sweater-clad attendants.

It is a picture exemplifying in its composition the essence of focus.

On this night the first ten or more rows encircling the squared circle gave back the light from ranks of low-cut waistcoats; for the "swell crowd" had made good, and taken every seat that had been engaged for it, and would have taken a greater number had foresight wrought still more efficiently.

No opera night, no première of a Bernhardt or Marlowe, had ever witnessed a more consistent support of wealth and *haut ton*, albeit no "gleaming shoulders" broke the solid rows of evening-coats.

Cigars glowed and waned; here and there a match spat for a moment in jealous, futile emulation of the arc-lights. The incense of Havana's best burned cloudily before the tainted shrine of Fisticuffs.

The shout of welcome that greeted the champion was strong and deep; but it was faint compared with the salvo of concerted cheers that met Silent Terry Mack when he climbed through the ropes.

Six husky graduates of different colleges, old in experience, renewed their cheering-section days and marshaled the pulsing tumult.

From one side rose the "brek-ek-ek-ex, ko-ex, ko-ex" of Yale, from another the throb of Harvard's more deliberate "Rah, rah, rah!" And in between smote upon the air the varying war-cries of Princeton, of Dartmouth, of Columbia, of Cornell, and other seats of learning and organized noise.

Nothing like this had ever been heard at a fight before. The great crowd, amused and sympathetic, took up and supplemented the cheers. It appeared, forsooth, that every man-jack in the building was pæaning the glory of his *alma mater;* for the different cheers, if not already familiar, were learned with amazing promptness.

To Terry the significance of the situation came with the suddenness and surprise of an explosion. Odd, familiar voices came floating up to him.

"Oh, you Gessler!"

"Hello, there, Ted!"

"Hey, Gessler, Gessler! This way!"

From one corner came in staccato cadence the repeated numerals of his college class. And every time one of the major cheers swelled and burst the whip-lash report at the end was:

"*Gessler!*"

It mattered not to Terry that the cohorts of his opponent took up these cheers and sent them reeling upon him as giant-powder behind the name of "Jensen." Rather, the concerted tumult lifted this despised game of his into the high realms of a nobler and approved sport.

He was no longer a vulgar, common pug. He was a gladiator, picked to stand for an ideal, the glorification of brawn. He was a gentleman, doing no ungentlemanly act. Prize-fighting was no longer a business; it was once more a sport, and he was its sportsman exponent.

Of course Terry could not, in the headlong rush of events, realize that his antagonist shared none of these lofty views.

With the champion a fight was a fight, to be won as it *could* be won, for reasons of commerce and finance. This fight should fill his empty coffers with the wherewithal to indulge certain tastes, of which the less said the better.

The unaccustomed noise irritated, goaded him. Even when he heard his own name appended to lusty cheers he took no comfort from that.

"Aw, you fools," he yelled, shaking his great fist, "shut up dat noise!"

For once the proverbially Smiling Swede forgot to smile.

The noise persisted and increased.

In sullen rage Jensen advanced to the fray. He would show those darned college fools. Who was this Gessler, masquerading under a pseudonym, fooling everybody?

His seconds had been unable to account for the new name, but they had assured him that there was no doubt of his opponent's identity.

Jensen, vicious with wrath, determined to put an early end to the contest. He had been told that the outcome was fixed —that the silent one was to "lie down" at what seemed an appropriate time. Flood had so promised. But Mack would have to make a bluff for a while, to save his face. He was foxy enough not to pull too raw a fake.

This meant that fighting must occur, and Jensen, red-eyed with rage, determined to take matters into his own hands rather than await the promised surrender.

Consequently the records of that fight are those of a contest unprecedented in fierceness. Surprised at Jensen's ferocity, Gessler seemed hard pressed in the earlier rounds. His method seemed to consist entirely of defense.

A hush fell, broken by savage yells when Jensen appeared to land telling blows. The odds climbed skyward with a rush, and Terry's adherents found plenty of "action" for all they cared to bet, which was a very great deal, at one to two.

As the battle progressed, however, it became evident that Jensen's rushing tactics were not producing the desired results. His seconds begged him to slacken his speed, to play a more Fabian game, to wait and watch and seize a fortuitous chance.

Carried away, however, by the excess of his passion, the champion gave no heed to that kind of advice. Consequently he fought himself out before the battle had gone the first half of its ten-round limit.

From then on the tide turned. Gessler, confident and serene, showed signs of increasing strength.

His blows landed oftener, he protected himself with greater ease. The odds

shifted as with the swift turn of a scale when a weight is removed.

That Terry must win became an established conclusion, and betting suddenly ceased altogether.

The friends of Jensen howled useless encouragement and adjurations to "Kill 'im, Ole, kill 'im! Go to his wind! Knock his head off!"

Jensen tried his best to respond, but vainly. He saw that he was a beaten man.

Now Terry, in the new exaltation of his calling, and finding his opponent more and more at his mercy, conceived a noble thought. When opportunity was his to bore in and finish him he held his hand. He would not kick a man who was down; why knock down one who was practically helpless?

He could do as he chose—should he act the cowardly part? It would be like striking a child.

The fickle, unbetting portion of the crowd begged raucously for a knockout. They had nothing at stake. Here was a new champion. The king was already dead. Long live King Terry!

They were there for gore—to them the nationality of the gore was after all immaterial.

Requests for the immediate, violent death of Jensen came swirling down from the heights. They had no effect upon Terry, secure in the righteousness of his determination not to knock out an already hopelessly defeated, wabbling, and all but helpless man.

Smiling, he pushed Jensen about the ring. It was a shame to do even that.

Jensen's backers, puzzled, now failed to see how Terry could, without rank obviousness, carry out his supposed agreement to throw the fight. He was not fool enough to do that. Plainly he had double-crossed them "for fair."

There was but one thing to do.

The eighth round ended. Whispered instructions poured into Jensen's bleeding ear. He nodded weakly, and at the tap of the gong tottered into the ring. Still the finishing blow did not come.

Jensen closed, staggering.

Suddenly a howl of anger tore at the roof-trusses; for the throng saw Terry, the already acclaimed victor, suddenly fall, writhing, and roll, chalky faced, upon the padded floor.

Jensen's adherents raged the news of their apparent victory to the vaulted roof. So the tide of battle had turned their way after all— What was that?

The heavy-voiced referee stepped to the ropes and held up a hand. The "triumph and the shouting died" as if some one had shut it off with a switch.

From a million miles beyond the confines of the solar system came Tracy's voice to Jeanne, trembling and swaying at the phone.

"Terry wins," it said, "in the nint' round—referee's decision. 'Twould been a knockout, but Jensen lost his goat and fouled— Hello, hello, do you get me? I said—"

But Jeanne, leaning helplessly against the telephone desk, was sobbing, sobbing, sobbing.

In his dressing-room Rocks Tracy consoled the victor.

"Never you mind, old boy," he said. "It'll be all right in a few minutes. Kinder jarred your li'l' ol' bread-basket, did he? What do you care? We're goin' to buy a ranch—yes, two of 'em!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

After Two Years.

AT the Youngsters' Club its most distinguished member, Mr. Theodore Gessler, "received his friends," flanked by Rocks Tracy and the faithful eight. They had "pulled the trick." True to their compact with Jeanne Flood, they had made a hero of the new champion.

Instead of a vulgar prize-fighter, he was a sportsman and a gentleman. The story of his rehabilitation was high romance, rosy-hued.

He had fought against odds, climbing up out of a den of wolves into which he had been flung, lifting himself by his boot-straps when he hadn't even any boots.

Already—and the fight had been over a scant hour—the *Trumpet* extras were storming broadcast, thick as snow-flakes bearing the true inside story of the phenomenal rise of this child of fortune, who, handicapped first by too much money, and then by too little, had made himself great.

The *Trumpet* had piled scoop upon scoop, for, whereas Veldtman and Tabner

had obtained all the facts, the other papers could only state the skeleton of the story, patched together with guesswork and conjecture.

The *Trumpet* exalted young Gessler, and as soon as the rest "came to" they naturally followed suit.

The name of Gessler was as golden to conjure with in honor as it would have been in disgrace. And how easy, thought the hero, it might have been disgraced!

Mothers at next morning's breakfast-tables read the story to their sons with tears streaming down their faces. Veldtman had done his work well, and Tabner had ably seconded him.

The alcoholic phase of Gessler's history was very properly eliminated. He was a hero of whom nothing but good should be said or pictured.

Gessler winced as he thought of what might have been, and while he likewise winced at the garishness of the unavoidable publicity he fervently hoped that newspaper readers would take it all with a grain of salt; and this of course the majority of them did.

The jubilant Youngsters kept Gessler much longer than he had intended to stay. He was tired, bruised, and too confused by events to realize his good fortune or taste his own happiness.

Tracy had telephoned Jeanne immediately, and afterward Terry called her up and received her obviously tearful congratulations.

The days ahead were to be trying ones for both; for although Gessler's social status was secure, there would be a thousand questions to answer. People had known for long of his attentions to Jeanne. Even after he had ceased to go to the Flood house, he had been seen on the avenue with Miss Flood, had called with her upon various important people, and she had made no secret of her delight in his company.

It was going to be embarrassing for her, this publicity. Of course Veldtman and Tabner had kept her name out of the *Trumpet;* but would the other papers be as discreet?

In the long run she didn't care—it would soon blow over, especially as they were going out into the country and farm it as soon as they were married—and ultimately try ranching in the West. But for the present it would be disturbing.

Suggestions of all these things crossed Gessler's weary mind as he stood in the Youngsters' big reading-room, surrounded by admiring acquaintances, most of them waving steins and informing all whom it might concern that "Heee was a jolligood failow, wish nobody can deny"; and which nobody wanted to deny—except one. That one was Anselm Flood.

In a frenzy of dismay and anger he had sought Tracy and Gessler from one end of town to the other. His hatred, increased a hundredfold by the discovery that Gessler was the wonderful unknown fighter, and that, as he believed, Tracy and the young man had double-crossed him, drove him headlong from place to place, until he at last found the pair at the Youngsters'.

At every convenient opportunity he had added to his already insane condition the stimulus of liquor. He knew he was ruined. Jensen had skinned him to the queen's taste. In the latter days of the training period he had sought to call a halt, but Jensen's extravagance had already gone beyond all decent bounds.

Flood, not only believing that his fancied bargain with Tracy would be consummated, but with considerable confidence in the prowess of Jensen, had bet every dollar he could beg, borrow, or—yes, steal; for he had converted a considerable quantity of securities not his own into cash.

Moreover, he had encouraged his acquaintances to bet likewise, and many a man, upon Flood's assurance that he had things "all sewed up," had risked and lost.

At the odds which Flood's lavish expenditure for advertising and Jensen's public methods of training had created, those who had chosen to back Terry had "cleaned up" handsomely—and had, with corresponding ruinous results, "cleaned out" the opposition.

Into the peaceful if bibulous scene at the Youngsters' Club, where Gessler was the unwilling and unimbibing center of attraction, burst Flood, crazed with chagrin and drink and thirsting for revenge. He was not a member of the Youngsters, but he had many acquaintances on its roster. Also the doorman had been instructed not to be too scrupulous; the club was keeping open house to-night.

"Where's hero?" Flood demanded. "Where's fire-eatin' demon o' th' prize-ring, hey? Wanner c'ngrash'late 'im!"

One or two sought to shoulder him out, or stay his progress, but he blundered on, thrusting aside those in his way until he confronted the new champion.

"You dirty sneak," said Flood. "You crook—you dirty, 'mis'ble bum! Wha' shou go'n' do 'bout me bein' ruined, hey? *You* did it—you 'n' that other thief, tha' blackleg, Trashy. You—"

Here followed a torrent of unspeakable abuse. The crowd drew back, horror-struck. One or two started forward, quite determined to oust the intruder forthwith.

"Shtan' back," suddenly howled Flood, dragging a revolver into sight from somewhere in his baggy clothes. "Shtan' back; I'll settle these dirty crooks m'self. They've ruined me, tha's wha' they've done. Now's my turn—I'm go'n' do li'l' ruinin' on m' own account." He swung the wavering muzzle of the gun toward Rocks.

"You firs', you dog," he said, and fired.

Teddy Gessler may have been a hero up to this point. He became ten times the hero now. Without a moment's hesitation he sprang upon Flood. The first shot went wild. Before Teddy could get possession of the pistol a second shot echoed through the room.

Gessler sank upon the floor, a red stream trickling from his temple.

By this time Rocks Tracy had got into action. Ably seconded by club members, he pinioned the lunatic before a third cartridge could be exploded.

There was a frenzied running about, telephone calls for medical assistance, for the police, and even for the fire department. The club-house was in an uproar.

They carried the unconscious Teddy to a bedroom, where the surgeon found him bleeding from a bad wound made by a glancing ball. When he had dressed it he ordered the sufferer off to the hospital.

Next day Gessler's temperature ran to one hundred and three, where it stuck for several days. The bruising he had received from the savage Jensen, the pistol wound, and his high-strung nervous condition combined to give him a merry siege of illness.

During this time an astonishing amount of mail accumulated for him at the Youngsters. There were jobs galore to be had for the asking, in banks, counting-rooms, sales departments.

Fathers begged him to act as tutor for growing sons. Even clergymen invited him to preach to young men on the advantages of a life of endeavor and sobriety.

Rocks Tracy came to see him on the first day he could see visitors, but was told that but one visitor a day would be allowed the patient, and that he was the second applicant.

So he went sadly down-town and bought a few coupon bonds with some loose hundred-dollar bills he had collected that morning from makers of "credit bets."

Half of these he had registered in the name of Theodore Gessler; the other half in that of his wife; and with all the proceeds of the battle he pursued the same policy.

He did see Gessler the next day. "How is Flood to-day?" asked the sick man.

"Him? Oh, he's doin' well. He's sober, but not sane; an' he never will be.

"They're sendin' him to the bughouse up-State to-morrow. His sister's going to take him there. She's broke up entirely over the whole affair. Do you know, somehow, Terry, I can't help feelin' sorry for a guy like him. He was his own worst enemy."

"Poor chap!" said Gessler. "He never did me half the harm he's done himself."

"May I come in?" asked a low voice. "They said I could come up; you're so much better to-day two callers would be all right. Oh, Rocks, Rocks, how glad I am to see you!"

Jeanne went over and took the rugged, honest face between her hands. Then she kissed him squarely on the lips.

"That's what I think of you," she said.

Rocks surveyed her critically. She was very beautiful, with her big, brown eyes and her gown of subdued color. The strain of the last two weeks, added to that preceding the culmination of events, had set its mark upon her.

"You're a bird, Miss Jeanne!" said Rocks earnestly, licking his lips as if they had been touched with honey. "Say, I s'pose you know this guy saved my life, don't you? There some more obligations. I'm in debt up to me neck."

"Oh, Rocks," cried Jeanne a little sadly, kneeling by the bed and laying her cheek against her lover's thin but happily smiling face, "don't let's talk about obligations any more. Let's put all our obligations into one bag and buy that ranch!"

The End.

On the Editorial Carpet

Where We Gather in the Hut, Tell Our Troubles, Help One Another, and Sing Some Old Songs.

WHAT do you think of "Tales from the Knights of the Railroad Round-Table," the first feature in this number of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE? It is written by railroad men who have experienced the things to which they have bent their pens. In these stories the reader can sense the clang of metal on metal, and feel that vibrant thing which leaps with sentient power through the whole fabric of the railroad business. The stories are alive, the men who write them are alive, the characters are alive. There is something doing in every line.

The editor of this magazine feels that there will always be something missing so long as the drama of this greatest of all industries is presented through cold type, but if the men who write it are actors in the real production, some of its force and power will get into the blood of those who read of it. In these "Tales from the Knights of the Railroad Round-Table" it is our desire to bring this whole vast family of readers and contributors into intimate association.

If any railroad man happens to have a story up his sleeve that ought to go into this department, send it along. Make it brief and dramatic, and when the story is ended, quit writing. Come now, you jousters of the rail who daily break a lance with Fate and get away with it, write the tales you've lived.

NEXT month's issue of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE will provide you with a wonderful dime's worth. The novel alone is worth the price of admission. This stirring piece of fiction is

THE MYSTERY OF THE LISTENING MAN

BY FRANK BLIGHTON

Author of "Tangled," "When Boobs Is Boobs," etc.

Mr. Blighton is another powerful writer recently added to the ranks of contributors to this magazine. "The Mystery of the Listening Man," his latest, longest and best work, is laid along the so-called "Peavey" line in the mountains of the far West, where a strange murder occurred which seemed impossible of solution.

You'll never guess in advance who the murderer was; but when he is finally shown up you will wonder why you hadn't guessed his identity before. Incidentally you will learn how it feels to go prospecting on the parched plains, to learn braking on a mountain road, and to drive a cornered desperado out of his rat-hole. But not until the very end will you learn why the listening man listened and what he listened for!

"The Mystery of the Listening Man" will fill a long evening with entertainment, thrills, guesswork, and suspense. Be sure to read it.

* * * * * * * * *

THE next number will also be unusually strong in features and special articles. Newton A. Fuessle will tell of big criminals nabbed as they attempted flight by rail; George W. Foster will write on the colossal task of obtaining a physical valuation of the railroads; Don "Q" will describe how the authorities of the Union of South Africa

built a war railroad 314 miles long when the reserve stocks of railroad building-material in the colony were practically non-existent; Arthur Curran will have a few words to say about the latest types of Pullman car; M. E. Carroll will make you snicker right out in meetin' with his reminiscences of the funny happenings that lighten the day's work of a chief clerk; C. H. Claudy will contribute an important paper on the "Safety-First!" movement—a movement, he says, which is good business as well as good philanthropy; and W. Bob Holland will have a surprise for you when he spins his true yarn about freak railroad accidents.

All this, of course, quite aside from the three sets of serial articles we are running. In considering these, remember that the inimitable *Spike Malone* will discuss the wos of the fireboy who has to keep up steam in the big new Mallet compounds; that the philosophical *station agent* will have some remarks to make on the extreme folkiness of folks; and that Walter Gardner Seaver will publish another paper on "Railroading Under Diaz."

* * * * * * * *

WE herewith stick out our chest over the bunch of short stories which we'll print in the next RAILROAD MAN'S.

Honk and Horace, of course—the magazine wouldn't be complete without them. I particularly want you to read the adventure that befell this comical couple, as narrated by *Horace* next month. It will give you a stitch in the side, sure.

There will also be a screamer of a story by Olin L. Lyman about the time when *Brick Mulford* backslid with a sickening swish.

Horace H. Herr will continue the rib-tickling adventures of *Conductor Lengthy Lewis* and his fat engineer, *Squatting Ox*, while Charles W. Tyler will give us another of his famous Hill Division stories, which have proved so popular.

Two authors to make their début in the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE next month are G. C. Lyman and John T. Winterich—one with a story about a stock extra that is as funny in its way as "Pigs Is Pigs" and the other with an appealing little tale that deals with a runaway child.

These, mind you, are only a few of the good things that are coming to you in the February RAILROAD MAN'S. I could go on indefinitely describing the other features, but I won't, for I want to keep lots of space for printing and commenting on letters out of the month's mail-bag.

INCOMPARABLE.

THANK you, Mr. Smith, for your subjoined letter and your enclosure. It is a pleasure to know that your original opinions concerning the magazine are justified by the events that have followed. You are entitled to all the applause that any one man can handle for getting the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE started in Stoneboro, and I hereby bestow upon you that applause to have and to hold.

I want you to keep your eye on the forthcoming issues of this publication. It is going to be better every month, and your local newsdealer will profit in sales at the same ratio that you will profit in satisfaction.

I take pleasure in enclosing herewith check for one dollar in payment of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE for one year. Am glad to know that you have decided to put the price back to the old stand-by, although I would have the magazine if it cost twenty-five cents, as I claim the credit in getting it first started here several years ago.

I purchased the first copy and induced the newsdealer to send for a few. He now sells about twenty-five copies per month. I work on the railroad and think there is no magazine to be compared with it.

Yours truly,
E. E. SMITH, Opr.
Stoneboro, Pennsylvania.

FROM A WOUNDED SOLDIER.

HERE'S a mighty interesting letter from a railroad man with a Scotch name, a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces, who at the time he wrote—October 6—was laid up in a hospital in France, "somewhere near the firing-line." Let's hope you've recovered long since, old man, and that you will live to read many another issue of the RAILROAD MAN'S. By the way, the fact that the magazine has found its way to the trenches prompts the suggestion that you get busy and organize a contest to determine the most unexpected or out-of-the-way place in which you discovered a copy.

Not, when you come right down to it, that it is surprising that this monthly is at the front, for its circulation is world-wide; but one thought leads to another with an apparent irrelevance that is the despair of the psychology sharps.

I have been a constant reader of your magazine since one of its first editions and up to a year ago I never missed a copy. As you know a soldier can't find the time to read books, especially while training to face the "Jack Johnsons."

But you couldn't believe how pleased I was to receive a copy of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE while I was in the trenches. It was like meeting a long-lost friend, and believe me it was some treat. That was last May.

Lately I have been laid up in the hospital with wounds and have just received a copy of your October edition. It is still the same old friend and has proved a friend to all the boys. So you may be proud to know that your book is not only read in the house across the seas where everything seems quiet, but alongside of the guns also.

The copy I had traveled from one end of the firing-line to the other, and I saw it last in possession of a British prisoner. I am at present lying in a hospital a short distance from the noise of the guns and feel certain that in a short time I will be back again on my old freight-run protecting the rear end. "A. M. MONTREAL."

THE OTHER MULFORD SPEAKS.

WHEN Olin L. Lyman christened his Texan hero *"Brick" Mulford* he might have started something had Mr. R. W. Mulford, of Dallas, been of a carping disposition. But as it is everything is all right. Keep your eye on the *Brick Mulford* series, Mr. R. W. Mulford—and everybody else—and you will find before you get through that *Brick* and his wife are about the busiest couple that ever showed up in the great Southwest.

Of course, Mr. Mulford, I am proud that you have been reading the magazine since it started, and if I can fix that new calendar for you and bring it out once a week you may be sure I will go as far as I can.

Keep your eye on the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE and put your trust in the future.

And now for Mr. Mulford's letter, which I am glad to print for its vein of good humor, if for nothing else:

In the September number of your magazine I notice that you are going to run a series of stories about *Brick Mulford*.

Go ahead and use my name in vain all you like just so you get out the same good line of stuff that you have always done.

I think that I got about the first copy of your magazine when you brought it out, and I do not think that I have ever missed a number since—and if I can help it I won't ever.

I would send in the necessary money and tell you to send it to me at my home, but as I travel all of the time, I would have to wait until I would get in to read it or else buy two copies. It is for sale at all of the news-stands, so I can get it a lot quicker by not being a subscriber.

I find that a great many of the railroad boys all over the western part of this State are readers of your magazine and, of course, a lot that are not railroaders.

It would suit me fine if you would establish a new calendar and have the 10th of the month come about four times a month so that I could get four times the amount of RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINES that I do.

So, go to it and use the Mulford name all you want to.

Yours very truly,
R. W. MULFORD.

500 E. Jefferson Avenue,
Dallas, Texas.

LIKES THE REDUCED PRICE.

THE next correspondent's hunch—namely, that we print some articles on track-work—is duly noted and will be acted upon as soon as possible. Please likewise take notice that he is also rooting for the magazine. If it pleases you as much as it does him, why not help the good work along yourself?

I like the reduction in the price of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE as well as I like the magazine, which is going some. I am getting a few trackmen interested in it and would like to see more articles on track-work, as the great body of trackmen, something over 400,000, ought to have something in their line or we will get behind the times. J. H. GIBBS.

Harris, Kansas.

WANTS TALES OF EASTERN ROADS.

WHY are so many of our stories laid alongside the tracks of the Teepee and the Espee, and so few along the lines in the Atlantic coast territory? And why isn't the railroad office-boy a more conspicuous figure in contemporary literature? Those are questions which this correspondent wants answered.

I'll bite. Why? What's the answer? It seemed to me that we were giving the Eastern roads a good break, but maybe not. And possibly the office-boy doesn't loom up more largely because his spokesman has not yet turned up. Has anybody else any views on the subject?

A friend who has every copy of RAILROAD MAN'S since the first issue, gave me clearance on the bunch, and I did not slow down until the last pound of steam was used.

If what I am going to say could be classified

as criticism we will try to agree that it is in l. c. l. lots this month.

First: Why not play up some of the Eastern or Northeastern roads, and not so much Espee and Teepee?

With Mexican railroading and stories of desert life I think the West comes in for more than its share. True, distance lends, *et cetera*, and most of the rail-pounding is done in the East, yet there are many yarns yet out of print right at home.

"When 'Brick' Mulford Married" is a good story of the rail.

Once more I raise a howl. Just a little squeak, but some answer I must have. Of course, you have many good reasons on file, so please air one on the question:

"Why do not the office-boys come in for a little notice, as the string rattles on?"

They are just as interested in railroad life as any shack that ever answered the caller. There are thousands doing such work, and are just as essential as any other class or they would not be there.

Give us a story of Robert the Rate Clerk, who lights on a rotten rate, investigates the tariff, and unearths a rotten scheme for robbing the company. Or Sally the Stenog, who leaves the dictaphone open, goes out to the stock-room for a second, and finds the villain left his dastardly plot on the record, never thinking the machine was running. Curses!

There are thousands of chances to get these office-boys in who railroad on paper.

I will now switch on to a line of praise if you will. The "Knight of the Punch" and "Tickets, Please," by Claude Washington, are the very best in their line. Do not allow C. W. to stop until he has covered every department in the service.

I regard *Honk and Horace* as an institution and can't think of them laying off. Send 'em to the expositions, as there are lots of places to get into trouble there.

J. E. Smith is right there with the goods. I suggest you sign him on a life contract.

Keep up the "Boomer" stories. They are as interesting as a hotel on fire.

Just keep your stock rolling in the same direction you started it, and you will be declaring dividends before the road is old enough to be in the association. Your subject is the most interesting in America. It is a science and art, with a gripping romance.

Los Angeles, California. C. C. CAMDEN.

FROM A CLERGYMAN.

THE Rev. Mr. Bergstrom, who writes the following letter, has many treats in store if he likes Tyler's work, for we have on hand a number of this writer's stories which are even better than the one our correspondent mentions.

I have many times thought of dropping you a line about the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE, and to-day my thought goes into action. Your magazine is the only one I read and I find it excellent in every way.

Specially I have to thank you for a story in the May number entitled "With Clear Rights," by Mr. Charles Tyler. It is a story after my mind, one which makes the people stop and think. Wishing you a bright future, I remain one of your thankful readers,

REV. WM. H. BERGSTROM.
2807 Champa Street,
Denver, Colorado.

"No. 111,111" AGAIN.

WHAT car now in service can show the longest string of numbers all of the same denomination? Since his attention was called to the matter the reader whose letter is appended has been keeping his eyes open with the result that he has noted one car numbered with ten ones in succession. Can anybody beat this?

About two years ago I saw a letter in your department, "On the Editorial Carpet," some reader wrote of seeing box-car No. 111,111, C. B. and O., in the West somewhere. As I am working for the "Q," I've been on the lookout for the same number.

This morning while going from work I noticed a Q box on No. 4 team track at Harrison Street, built 11-11, C. B. and O. No. 111,111, which I think is going some for straight numbers.

Is there any other of the RAILROAD MAN'S readers that can beat that for straight numbers? If so, let's hear from them. Have been taking the magazine since 1910. J. R. J.

Chicago, Illinois.

ADDRESSES WANTED.

Readers of the RAILROAD MAN'S MAGAZINE *who make requests to locate missing relatives through these columns must abide by the following:*

All requests must be written in ink and a complete description of the missing person given, as well as full name and age.

We will not publish these notices unless they are signed by the nearest living relative of the missing person, and we must be assured that every effort has been made to locate him through the various brotherhoods or associations to which he might belong.

The person making the request must also give his or her complete address.

INFORMATION is wanted by Dr. William J. Camp of his daughter, Mary, who was born April 15, 1886, on the Delta, near Greeley, Colorado. She was taken from an orphan home in Denver, Colorado, by James Selby and his wife, Flora. They applied to the County Court on April 15, 1892, and were granted their request

by the court on May 10, 1892. Mary Camp's name was changed to Mary Alice Selby. James and Flora Selby were at the time living in Denver, and James was a brakeman on the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad.

Since 1894 all trace of them has been lost. Mary was twenty-nine years old on the 15th of April, 1915. Any information as to her whereabouts will be appreciated by her father, who is ninety-nine years old, and has walked through thirty-one States on crutches looking for her and has been in forty-two States and nearly all the principal cities of the Union. Address DR. WILLIAM J. CAMP, Room 8, 1163 Champa Street, Denver, Colorado.

INFORMATION is wanted regarding J. E. Brosz, who left his home in Kulm, North Dakota, about a year ago. Address his brother, P. T. BROSZ, Kulm, North Dakota.

INFORMATION is wanted of Walter J. Riley, born in Rochester, New York, July 3, 1879. He worked in Rochester in the New York Central yards up to July of this year, when all trace of him was lost. His wife would like to find him. If any of his brother trainmen know of his whereabouts will they kindly notify MRS. M. G. RILEY, Rochester, New York?

THE POETS' CORNER.

Various readers have requested that we reprint "Asleep at the Switch," "Ostler Joe," and "Philip Barton of Denver." Is there any one in the audience who can supply the words?—THE EDITOR.

BILL MILLER'S PARDON, OR THE TRIBULATIONS OF A ROUNDHOUSE FOREMAN.

WILLIAM J. MILLER ('course the name is fictitious),
Is a man who was never at all superstitious;
But a dream which he had is direct intimation
Of his faith in the doctrine of predestination.
Now, the said William Miller, please bear in your mind,
Is a bright roundhouse foreman, who, like all of his kind,
Has trials and troubles too many to state—
And with this introduction his dream I'll relate.
A spirit appeared at his bedside one night,
Decked out in a garment of pure, spotless white,
And thus addressed Bill: "To me has been given
Command from the Recording Angel in Heaven
To ascertain why 'tis your name should appear
On the Great Book of Life, as the reason's not clear.
The profanity record has been kept for ages,
But nothing like yours appears on its pages;
Therefore, 'tis decided, unless you can show
Just cause for defense, to send you below,
Where the fire is unquenched, and those who have never
Repented, are roasted forever and ever."
On hearing the latter, Bill tried hard to smile,
And invited the spirit to tarry a while.
"If I fail to make my defense in full measure,"
He said, "I'll be sentenced with greatest of pleasure.
Please remain here to-morrow, accompany me,
And report to headquarters whatever you see."
The spirit agreed, I am happy to say,
And took note of what happened the following day.
First, a conceited young clerk, with expression satanic,
Brought a bundle of letters from the master mechanic.
And here a few extracts I'll give as example
Of the bunch that the spirit took away for a sample:
"Please note that the superintendent complains
You are using poor coal for our passenger trains."
"Please let me know what excuse you can make
Why so many new compound packing rings break."
"Engine failures, last year, for the month were but seven;
I regret for the same time this year there's eleven."
"You must take up the matter and ascertain why
We used so much oil in the month of July.
You are surely aware that a half pint to use
Of valve oil per hundred is simply abuse;
I believe 'twould be wise (at least we can try it)
To give engineers feathers with which to apply it."
"The president's special is leaving to-day,
At ten forty-five; there must be no delay."
But, alas! For the plans of mice and of men!
The telephone rang at exactly ten ten,
And old Phil, the caller, announced with a drawl:
"De fireman is sick. Who else will I call?"
A fire-up man appeared just then at the door—
"The crown sheet is down in the 74."
Then next comes an engineer, swelled like a toad—
You'd think from his looks that he'd surely explode—
And asked loud in the name of the evil one:
"Why hain't the work on my engine been done?"
Bill Miller, he then made an angry retort;
While the spirit examined the work report
Of this same engineer; and this was the news:
"Wash out the biler and boar out the flews,
The seems are a squirtin'. Cork all the leaks.
Rite back driver box is so dry that it squeeks.
Steam-pipes are leaking. Pack throttle well.
Right main pin cut and runs hotter than—(it should).
All the rod bushings are loose on both sides.
Set up the wedges and line up the gides.
The air pump jerks on the upward stroak.
Exzamin' and see if the valve ain't broak.
Take down left mane rod, reduce the brass,
And don't fail to put in a watter glass.
Raze the frunt end an inch or more,

And fix the ketch on the firebox door,
I think from the way she burns her fire.
Her petticoat should be a little hire."
Before the good spirit got through taking notes
From the book containing the work reports,
From the chief despatcher came a message which read:
"The Golden Gate Special's engine is dead.
Send another at once to take the train.
Why you sent this one on 21, please explain."
Then a hostler announced that a broken switch
Had caused him to put engine 12 in the ditch.
The spirit departed, but on that same night
Returned with a crown, and in greatest delight
Presented to Bill's most astonished vision
A text of the Recording Angel's decision,
And a list of the great hero saints all revealed,
With William J. Miller's name leading the field.

—*Exchange.*

EYES.

MY Father, Thou art good to give me these
With which to see along the common way
The outer beauty of Thy mysteries—
These orbs that catch the ever-varied ray.

My Father, Thou art good to let me peer
Through such fine lenses on Thy world that lies
So beautiful along the changing year—
Why, all our life of joy is in our eyes.

My Father, though they often look through gloom
On shadowy skies that clouds have turned to night,
I thank Thee most for faith to see the bloom
And know, through faith, still shineth Thy clear light.

And would mine eyes—so gifted, Lord, to see
The outer beauty of this world of Thine—
Could also catch that inner sight of Thee
Which makes our golden visions seem divine.

—*Baltimore Sun.*

ONLY A BOOMER BRAKEMAN.

ONLY a boomer brakeman
Hailing from no one knew where,
Couldn't guess when he landed,
And nobody seemed to care.
For boomers come and boomers go
When the harvest fields are bright
Coming like birds from the southland
And passing like ships in the night.

He had "broke" across the Summit
And where the snow-capped Cascades stand,
Seen the plains of far off Texas
By the silvery Rio Grande.
Knew the white lights of old Broadway
And California's Golden Gate.
Had tried the "pass" at Skagway,
In the northland's vast estate.

Down through a valley at sunset,
Close of a summer day,
Nature was looking its grandest,
Song birds singing their lay.
Swiftly the train was speeding
Banners of smoke floating high,
Softly around the tree tops
Home and dear ones close by.

Round the curve with warning whistles
Ahead on the gleaming rails
A wee little figure toddled,
Unmindful of engine wails.
A glance told of deadly danger,
Hearts of the crew went cold
'Twas Bessie, the section baby,
Blue eyes and curls of gold.

Over the engine tender
Through the gangway like a flash
Scrambling from cab to pilot
In eager panting dash,
Midst noise of grinding brake shoes
Through hissing of steam and air,
The boomer's arm encircled
A babe with krinkly hair.

He was only a boomer brakeman
But the light in mother's eyes
Was like the glory preachers tell us
Will be shining in Paradise.
As she thanked him for her baby,
He looked on the wee one fair
And said, "I've a baby sister
With blue eyes and krinkly hair."

JAMES P. LEO, in *Railroad Trainman.*

MAINTENANCE—TASK ETERNAL.

ONE labored from dawn to sunset,
A Builder, with bar and spade,
And he wrought a ribbon of rock and steel
To bear the shock of a flying wheel
Linking the marts of Trade.

Right well he wrought, and swiftly,
But the Road is scarce begun;
For the rock will settle and shock to dust
And the ties will rot and the rails will rust
Till never the task be done.

So his is the splendid service
Who guards what the other gains;
Rebuilding the bridges, relaying the rail,
Replacing the ties; lest the least should fail
In the path of our flying trains.

He gives us the World of Commerce
Created anew each day!
For Transportation, the life of Trade,
Depends on each bridge, on each curve and grade
In his steel-ribbed right-of-way!

—*Exchange.*

Rooms always just right

If any of us deserves or requires a room warmed just right to sleep in, to play in and to live in, it is the little folks. The room must be warm of course, but if old-fashioned heating is used, what happens? The air is burned, parched, dead air — the old heating devices absorb the oxygen and its place is taken by carbon-dioxide, which pollutes the atmosphere. Don't take a chance, but correctly heat your home with

AMERICAN RADIATORS & IDEAL BOILERS

IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators warm the air alike throughout every room in the way it should be without robbing it of its life-giving oxygen and filling it with poison. That is why greenhouses are *invariably* users of steam or hot water heating. So, too, practically every sanitorium, hospital, institution, etc., uses our outfits.

IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators furnish the only scientific and correct means of heating *any* building. Besides, you can warm your entire building with less fuel, and save heavily in labor, cleaning, absence of repairs, no rekindling of fires, no rusting, blackening, etc.

A No. 5-23-W IDEAL Boiler and 400 sq. ft. of 38 in. AMERICAN Radiators, costing the owner $200, were used to heat this cottage. At this price the goods can be bought of any reputable, competent Fitter. This did not include cost of labor, pipe, valves, freight, etc., which vary according to climatic and other conditions.

These outfits are the most largely used in all parts of America, as well as in the cold European countries, Australia and Japan. They have proved their wonderful superiority in fuel economy, heat control, reliability, cleanliness and easy-to-run-features. Nothing to wear out — will endure as long as the building, and you get your money back when property is sold, or obtain higher rental.

Measured by results, no one can afford not to put in these outfits in *old* or new cottages, houses, flats, stores, schools, churches, public buildings, etc.

Prices are now most attractive, and at this season you get the services of the most skillful fitters. Put in quickly, without disturbing present heaters until ready to start fire in the IDEAL Boiler. Your inquiry is cordially welcome — puts you under no obligation to buy. Ask for valuable book (free), "Ideal Heating." Act *now*.

$150 Permanent Cleaner

Ask for catalog of ARCO WAND Vacuum Cleaner. First genuinely practical Cleaner on market; is connected by iron suction pipe to all floors; and will last as long as your building.

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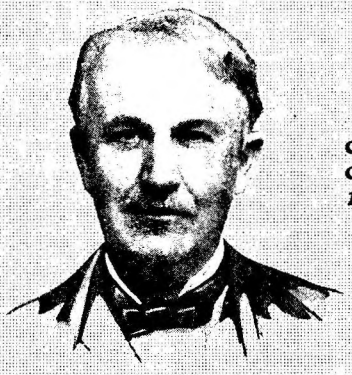

"Instruction by correspondence is the cheapest and best way for the poor man."
Thos A Edison

"I've often thought if I could have had the opportunity of a course in the I.C.S. when a boy, it would have saved me many a sleepless night." John Mitchell

"Of course they're right"

You admit the International Correspondence Schools are a good thing. You'd take a course right now "if"—"except"—

"If" what? If you weren't so "overworked," with such "long hours," or had more strength and energy? Didn't John Mitchell get his training after working 12 hours a day as a mine boy?

Wasn't it Edison who stayed up half the night to read every get-at-able book on electricity? Didn't he educate himself in spite of every handicap you could ever have? Spend as much time in I. C. S. study as you do in reading the newspapers and you'll get that promotion before you know it.

All big men who have made their mark in the world had the *ambition*—the *determination*—to improve their spare time, to train themselves for big work. You, too, can possess power, money and happiness if you'll only make the effort. The reward is great—it's worth it.

Here's all we ask: Merely mail this coupon. Put it up to us without paying or promising. Let us send you the details of others' success through the I. C. S., and then decide. Mark and mail this coupon now.

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Explain, without further obligation on my part, how I can qualify for the position before which I mark X

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MECHANICAL ENGINEERING	DESIGNING
Mechanical Drafting	BOOKKEEPING
Shop Practice	Stenography and Typewriting
Gas Engines	Higher Accounting
CIVIL ENGINEERING	Railway Accounting
Surveying and Mapping	Commercial Law
MINE FOREMAN AND SUPT.	GOOD ENGLISH FOR EVYONE
Metal Mining	Teachers Course
STATIONARY ENGINEERING	English Branches
Marine Engineering	CIVIL SERVICE
ARCHITECTURE	Railway Mail Clerk
Building Contractor	AGRICULTURE
Architectural Drafting	POULTRY
Concrete Engineering	Textile Manufacturing
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