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THE GRAFTERS

By

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CHAPTER XII.

THE MAN IN POSSESSION.

Appraised at its value in the current coin of street gossip, the legal seizure of the Trans-Western figured mainly as an example of the failure of modern business methods when applied to the concealment of a working corporation's true financial condition.

But in the state at large the press was discussing the event from a political point of view; one section, small but vehement, raising the cry of trickery and judicial corruption, and prophesying the withdrawal of all foreign capital from the state, while the other, large and complacent, pointed eloquently to the beneficent working of the law under which the cause of the poor woman, suing for her undoubted right, might be made the whip to flog corporate tyranny into instant subjection.

As for the dispossessed stock-holders in the faraway east, they were slow to take the alarm, and still slower to get concerted action. Like many of the western roads, the Western Pacific had been capitalized largely by popular subscription; hence there was no single holder, or group of holders, of sufficient financial weight to enter the field against the spoilers.

But when Loring and his associates had fairly got the wires hot with the tale of what had been done, and the much more alarming tale of what was likely to be done, the Boston inertness vanished. A pool of the stock was formed, with the members of the advisory board as a nucleus; money was subscribed, and no less a legal light than an ex-attorney-general of the state of Massachusetts was despatched to the seat of war to advise with the men on the ground. None the less, disaster out-travels the swiftest of "limited" trains. Before the heavily-feed consulting attorney had crossed the Hudson in his western journey, Wall Street had taken notice, and there was a momentary splash in the troubled pool of stock exchange and a vanishing circle of ripples to show where the Western Pacific had gone down.

In the meantime Major Guilford, somewhile president of the Apache National bank of Gaston, and antecedent to that, the frowning autocrat of a 25-mile logging road in the North Carolina mountains, had given bond in some sort and had taken possession of the company's property and the offices in the Quintard building.

His first official act as receiver was to ask for the resignations of a dozen heads of departments, beginning with the general manager and pausing for the moment with the supervisor of track. That done, he filled the vacancies with political troughsmen; and with these as assistant decapitators the major passed rapidly down the line, striking off heads in daily batches until the overflow of the Bucks political following was provided for on the railroad's pay-rolls to the wife's cousin's nephew.

This was the work of the first few administrative days or weeks, and while it was going on, the business attitude of the road remained unchanged. But once seated firmly in the saddle, with his awkward squad well in hand, the major proceeded to throw a bomb of consternation into the camp of his competitors.

Kent was dining with Ormsby in the grill-room of the Camelot club when the waiter brought in the evening edition of the Argus, whose railroad reporter had heard the preliminary fizzing of the bomb fuse. The story was set out on the first page, first column, with appropriate headlines.

WAR TO THE KNIFE AND THE KNIFE TO THE HILT.

TRANS-WESTERN CUTS COMMODITY RATES.

Great Excitement in Railroad Circles. Receiver Guilford's Hold-up.

Kent ran his eye rapidly down the column and passed the paper across to Ormsby.

"I told you so," he said. "They didn't find the road insolvent, but they are going to make it so in the shortest possible order. A rate war will do it quicker than anything else on earth."

Ormsby thrust out his jaw.

"Have we got to stand by and see 'em do it?"

"The man from Massachusetts says yes, and he knows, or thinks he does. He has been here two weeks now, and he has nosed out for himself all the dead-walls. We can't appeal, because there is no decision to appeal from. We can't take it out of the lower court until it is finished in the lower court. We can't enjoin an officer of the court; and there is no authority in the state that will set aside Judge MacFarlane's order when that order was made under technically legal conditions."

"You could have told him all that in the first five minutes," said Ormsby.

"I did tell him, and was mildly sat upon. To-day he came around and gave me back my opinion, clause for clause, as his own. But I have no kick coming. Somebody will have to be here to fight the battle to a finish when the judge returns, and our expert will advise the Bostonians to retain me."

"Does he stay?" Ormsby asked.

"Oh, no; he is going back with Loring to-night. Loring has an idea of his own which may or may not be worth the powder it will take to explode it. He is going to beseech the Boston people to enlarge the pool until it controls a safe majority of the stock."

"What good will that do?"

"None, directly. It's merely a safe preliminary to anything that may happen. I tell Loring he is like all the others: he knows when he has enough and is willing to stand from under. I'm the only fool in the lot."

Ormsby's smile was heartening and good for sore nerves.

"I like your pluck, Kent; I'll be hanged if I don't. And I'll back you to win, yet."

Kent shook his head unhopefully.

"Don't mistake me," he said. "I am fighting for the pure love of it, and not with any great hope of saving the stockholders. These grafters may have us by the nape of the neck. We can't make a move till MacFarlane comes back and gives us a hearing on the merits. That may not be till the next term of court. Meanwhile, the temporary receiver is to all intents and purposes a permanent receiver; and the interval would suffice to wreck a dozen railroads."

"And still you won't give up?"

"No."

"I hope you won't have to. But to a man up a tree it looks very much like a dead cock in the pit. As I have said, if there is any backing to do, I'm with you, first, last, and all the time, merely from a sportsman's interest in the game. But is there any use in a little handful of us trying to buck up against a whole state government?"

The coffee had been served, and Kent dropped a lump of sugar into his cup.

"Ormsby, I'll never let go while I'm alive enough to fight," he said slowly. "One decent quality I have—and the only one, perhaps: I don't know when I'm beaten. And I'll down this crowd of political plunderers yet, if Bucks doesn't get me sand-bagged."

His listener pushed back his chair.

"If you stood to lose anything more than your job I could understand it," he commented. "As it is, I can't. Any way you look at it, your stake in the game isn't worth the time and effort it will take to play the string out. And I happen to know you're ambitious to do things—things that count."

"What is it you don't understand—the motive?"

"That's it."

Kent laughed.

"You are not as astute as Miss Van Brock. She pointed it out to me last night—or thought she did—in two words."

Ormsby's eyes darkened, and he did not affect to misunderstand.

"It would be a grandstand play," he said half-musingly, "if you should happen to worry it through, I mean. I believe Mrs. Hepzibah would be ready to fall on your neck and forgive you, and turn me down." Then, half-jestingly: "Kent, what will you take to drop this thing permanently and go away?"

David Kent's smile showed his teeth. "The one thing you wouldn't be willing to give. You asked me once when we had fallen over the fence upon this forbidden ground if I were satisfied, and I told you I wasn't. Do we understand each other?"

"I guess so," said Ormsby. "But—Say, Kent, I like you too well to see you go up against a stone fence blindfolded. I'm like Guilford: I am the man in possession. And possession is nine points of the law."

Kent rose and took the proffered cigar from Ormsby's case.

"It depends a good bit upon how the possession is gained—and held—doesn't it?" he rejoined coolly. "And your figure is unfortunate in its other half. I am going to beat Guilford."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WRECKERS.

Just why Receiver Guilford, an officer of the court who was supposed to be nursing an insolvent railroad to the end that its creditors might not lose all, should begin by declaring war on the road's revenue, was a question which the managers of competing lines strove vainly to answer. But when, in defiance of all precedent, he made the cut rates effective to and from all local stations on the Trans-Western, giving the shippers at intermediate and non-competitive points the full benefit of the reductions, the railroad colony denounced him as a madman and gave him a month in which to find the bottom of a presumably empty treasury.

But the event proved that the major's madness was not altogether without method. It is an axiom in the carrying trade that low rates make business; create it, so to speak, out of nothing. Given an abundant crop, low prices, and high freight rates in the great cereal belt, and, be the farmers never so poor, much of the grain will be stored and held against the chance of better condition.

So it came about that Major Guilford's relief measure was timed to a nicety, and the blanket cut in rates opened a veritable flood-gate for business in Trans-Western territory. From the day of its announcement the traffic of the road increased by leaps and bounds. Stored grain came out of its hiding places at every country cross-roads to beg for cars, stock feeders drove their market cattle unheard-of distances, across the tracks of competing lines, over and around obstacles of every sort, to pour them into the loading corrals of the Trans-Western.

Nor was the traffic all out-going. With the easing of the money burden, the merchants in the tributary towns began thriftily to take advantage of the low rates to renew their stocks; long-deferred visits and business trips suddenly became possible; and the saying that it was cheaper to travel than to stay at home gained instant and grateful currency.

In a short time the rolling stock of the road was taxed to its utmost capacity, and the newly appointed purchasing agent was buying cars and locomotives right and left. Also, to keep pace with the ever-increasing procession of trains, a doubled construction force wrought night and day installing new side tracks and passing points.

Under the fructifying influence of such a golden shower of prosperity, land values began to rise again, slowly at first, as buyers intrusted the continuance of the golden shower; more rapidly a little later, as the Guilford policy defined itself in terms of apparent permanence.

Towns along the line—hamlets long since fallen into the way-station rut of desuetude—awoke with a start, bestirring themselves joyfully to meet the inspiriting conditions. At Midland City, Stephen Hawk, the new right-of-way agent, ventured to ask municipal help to construct a ten-mile branch to Lavabee: it was forthcoming promptly; and the mass meeting, at which the bond loan was anticipated by public subscription shouted itself hoarse in enthusiasm.

At Gaston, where Hawk asked for a donation of land whereon the company might build the long-promised division repair-shops, people fought with one another to be first among the donors. And at Juniberg, where the company proposed to establish the first of a series of grain subtreasuries—warehouses in which the farmers of the surrounding country could store their products and borrow money on them from the railroad company at the rate of three per cent. per annum—at Juniberg enough money was subscribed to erect three such depots as the heaviest crop could possibly fill.

It was while the pendulum of prosperity was in full swing that David Kent took a day off from sweating over his problem of ousting the receiver and ran down to Gaston. Single-eyed as he was in the pursuit of justice, he was not unmindful of the six lots standing in his name in the Gaston suburb, and from all accounts the time was come to dispose of them.

He was smoking his after-dinner cigar in the lobby of the hotel and trying as he might to orient himself when Blashfield Hunnicott drifted in. Kent gave the sometime local attorney a cigar, made room for him on the plush-covered settee, and proceeded to pump him dry of Gaston news. Summed up, the inquiries pointed themselves thus: was there any basis for the Gaston revival other than the lately changed attitude of the railroad? In other words, if the cut rates should be withdrawn and the railroad activities cease, would there not be a second and still more disastrous collapse of the Gaston bubble?

Pressed hardly, Hunnicott admitted the probability; given another turn, the screw of inquiry squeezed out an admission of the fact, slurred over by the revivalist, that the railway company's treasury was really the almsbox into which all hands were dipping.

"One more question and I'll let up on you," said Kent. "It used to be said of you in the flush times that you kept tab on the real estate transfers when everybody else was too busy to read the record. Do you still do it?"

Hunnicott laughed uneasily.

"Rather more than ever just now, as you'd imagine."

"It is well. Now you know the members of the old gang, from his excellency down. Tell me one thing: are they buying or selling?"

Hunnicott sprang up and slapped his leg.

"By Jupiter, Kent! They are selling—every last man of them!"

"Precisely. And when they have sold all they have to sell?"

"They'll turn us loose—drop us—quit booming the town, if your theory is the right one. But say, Kent, I can't believe it, you know. It's too big a thing to be credited to Jim Guilford and his handful of subs in the railroad office. Why, it's all along the line, everywhere."

"I'm telling you that Guilford isn't the man. He is only a cog in the wheel. There is a bigger mind than his behind it."

"I can't help it," Hunnicott protested. "I don't believe that any man or clique could bring this thing about unless we were really on the upturn."

"Very good; believe what you please, but do as I tell you. Sell every foot of Gaston dirt that stands in your name; and while you are about it sell those six lots for me in subdivision five. More than that, do it pretty soon."

Hunnicott promised, in the brokerage affair, at least. Then he switched the talk to the receivership.

"Still up in the air, are you, in the railroad grab case?"

Kent nodded.

"No news of MacFarlane?"

"Plenty of it. His health is still precarious, and will likely remain so until the spoilsmen have picked the skeleton clean."

Hunnicott was silent for a full minute. Then he said:

"Say, Kent, hasn't it occurred to you that they are rather putting meat on the bones instead of taking it off? Their bills for betterments must be out of sight."

It had occurred to Kent, but he gave his own explanation of Major Guilford's policy in a terse sentence.

"It is a part of the bluff; fattening the thing a little before they barbecue it."

"I suppose so. It's a pity we don't live a little farther back in the history of the world: say at a time when we could hire MacFarlane's doctor to obliterate the judge, and no questions asked."

Who can explain how it is that some jesting word, trivial and purposeless it may be, will fire a hidden train of thought which was waiting only for some chance spark? "Obliterate the judge," said Hunnicott in grim jest; and straightway Kent saw possibilities; saw a thing to be done, though not yet the manner of its doing.

"If you'll excuse me," he said abruptly to his companion, "I believe I'll try to catch the flyer back to the capital. I came down to see about selling those lots of mine, but if you will undertake it for me—"

"Of course," said Hunnicott; "I'll be only too glad. You've ten minutes: can you make it?"

Kent guessed so, and made the guess a certainty with two minutes to spare. The through sleeper was lightly loaded, and he picked out the most unneighbored section of the twelve, being wishful only for undisturbed thinking ground. But before the train had swung past the suburb lights of Gaston, the smoker's unrest seized him and the thought-wheels demanded tobacco. Kent fought it as long as he could, making sure that the smoking compartment liars' club would be in session; but when the demand became a nagging insistence, he found his pipe and tobacco and went to the men's room.

The little den behind the drawing-room had but one occupant besides the rear-end brakeman—a tall, saturnine man in a gray grass-cloth duster who was smoking a Porto Rican stogie. Kent took a second look and held out his hand.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Judge Marston. I was counting on three hours of solitary confinement."

The lieutenant-governor acknowledged the hand-clasp, nodded, and made room on the leather-covered divan for the new-comer. Hildreth, the editor of the Argus, put it aptly when he said that the grim-faced old cattle-king had "blown" into politics. He was a compromise on the ticket; was no part of the Bucks programme, and had been made to feel it. Tradition had it that he had been a terror to the armed and organized cattle thieves of the early days; hence the brevet title of "Judge." But those who knew him best did not know that he had once been the brightest man upon the supreme bench of his native state: this before failing health had driven him into exile.

For a time the talk was a desultory monologue, with Kent doing his best to keep it from dying outright. Later, when he was fairly driven in upon his reserves, he began to speak of himself, and of the hopeless fight for enlargement in the Trans-Western struggle. Marston lighted the match-devouring stogie for the twentieth time, squared himself on the end of the divan and listened attentively.

Marston opened his watch and looked at it. Then he lighted another of the villainous little cigars.

"We have an hour yet," he said. "You have given me the legal points in the case: now give me the inferences—all of them."

Kent laughed.

"I'm afraid I sha'n't be able to forget the lieutenant-governor. I shall have to call some pretty hard names."

"Call them," said his companion, briefly; and Kent went deep into the details, beginning with the formation of the political gang in Gaston the dismantled.

The listener in the gray dust-coat heard him through without comment. When Kent reached the end of the inferences, telling the truth without scruple and letting the charge of political and judicial corruption lie where it would, the engineer was whistling for the capital.

"You have told me some things I knew, and some others that I only suspected," was all the answer he got until the train was slowing into the union station. Then as he flung away the stump of the little cigar the silent one added: "If I were in your place, Mr. Kent, I believe I should take a supplementary course of reading in the state law."

"In what particular part of it?" said Kent, keen anxiety in every word.

"In that part of the fundamental law which relates to the election of circuit judges, let us say. If I had your case to fight, I should try to obliterate Judge MacFarlane."

Kent had but a moment in which to remark the curious coincidence in the use of precisely the same word by both Hunnicott and his present adviser.

"But my dear sir! we should gain nothing by MacFarlane's removal when his successor would be appointed by the executive!"

Marston turned in the doorway of the smoking-compartment and laid a fatherly hand on the younger man's shoulder.

"My boy, I didn't say 'remove;' I said 'obliterate.' Good-night."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GERRYMANDER.

With Judge Marston's hint partly to point the way, Kent was no long time in getting at work on the new lead.

Having been at the time a practitioner in one of the counties affected, he knew the political deal by which MacFarlane had been elected. Briefly described, it was a swapping of horses in midstream. In the preliminary canvass it was discovered that in all probability Judge MacFarlane's district, as constituted, would not re-

"GOOD, GOOD! DAVID, I'M PROUD OF YOU."

elect him. But the adjoining district was strong enough to spare a county without loss to the party; and that county added to MacFarlane's voting strength would tip the scale in his favor. The assembly was in session, and the remedy applied in the shape of a bill re-adjusting the district lines to fit the political necessity.

While this bill was still in the lower house an obstacle presented itself in the form of a vigorous protest from Judge Whitcomb, whose district was the one to suffer the loss. The county in question was a prosperous one, and the court fees—which a compliant clerk might secretly divide with the judge appointing him—were large: wherefore Whitcomb threatened political reprisals if Kiowa county should be taken away from him. The outcome was a compromise. For elective purposes the two districts were gerrymandered as the bill proposed; but it was expressly provided that the transferred county should remain judicially in Whitcomb's district until the expiration of Whitcomb's term of office.

Having refreshed his memory as to the facts, Kent spent a forenoon in the state library. He stayed on past the luncheon hour, feeding on a dry diet of digests; and it was not until hunger began to sharpen his faculties that he thought of going back of the statutory law to the fountain-head in the constitution of the state. Here, after he had read carefully section by section almost through the entire instrument, his eye lighted upon a clause which gradually grew luminous as he read and re-read it.

"That is what Marston meant; it must be what he meant," he mused; and returning the book to its niche in the alcove he sat down to put his face in his hands and sum up the status in logical sequence.

The conclusion must have been convincing, since he presently sprang up and left the room quickly to have himself shot down the elevator shaft to the street level. The telegraph office was closed, but there was another in the Hotel Brunswick, two squares distant, and thither he went.

"Hold the pool in fighting trim at all hazards. Think I have found weak link in the chain," was his wiring to Loring at Boston; and having sent it, he went around to Cassatti's and astonished the waiter by ordering a hearty luncheon at half-past three o'clock in the afternoon.

It was late in the evening before he left the tiny office on the fifth floor of the Quintard building where one of his former stenographers had set up business for herself. Since five o'clock the young woman had been steadily driving the type-writer to Kent's dictation. When the final sheet came out with a whirring rasp of the ratchet, he suddenly remembered that he had promised Miss Van Brock to dine with her. It was too late for the dinner, but not too late to go and apologize, and he did the thing that he could, stopping at his rooms on the way to dress while his cab-driver waited.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Miscellaneous Reading.

SOUTH CAROLINA D. A. R'S.

State Delegation Having Good Time at National Congress.

The South Carolina delegates to the Continental Congress of the Daughters of the American Revolution are much in evidence and show to an advantage even in this big crowd of fine looking and splendidly robed women from all over the country, says the Washington correspondent of the Columbia Record. The delegates are here from every known part of the United States. The South Carolina contingent stand comparison in every way with the women from any state.

The gathering was extremely large on the opening day, when the grand new hall was used for the first time. The flags and decorations were unusually beautiful. These, together with the bright dresses and happy faces, made a scene to be remembered. Scattered among the palms were the shields of the thirteen original states, with that of South Carolina most prominent. But the thirteen originals must pay for the honor, as each is expected to pay for and contribute a column to the colonnade to be erected. The columns will cost $2,000 each and some of the states have already given theirs. The South Carolina delegates are wondering how they will be able to raise that amount in their state and they are already trying to think of ways and means for doing this.

The South Carolina delegation met Monday afternoon and evening at the residence of Mrs. A. I. Robertson, formerly of Columbia, where they were hospitably entertained. Mrs. Robertson had invited them to meet at her home and talk over affairs. The vice regent, Mrs. Nicholls, of Spartanburg, was present and so were the following: Mrs. Burnett and Mrs. Fleming, regents of Cowpens and Kate Barry chapters of Spartanburg; Mrs. Henderson and Miss Bell, of Aiken; Mrs. Moultrie Bratton, of Yorkville, and Mrs. Arthur V. Snell, who lives in this city, nee Miss Hart, of Yorkville; Mrs. John Bull, of Orangeburg; Mrs. L. D. Childs, of Columbia; Mrs. Moore, of Aiken. Mrs. Hal Richardson, state regent, was too much engaged at the hall to leave. Among others in the city, some of whom were present at Mrs. Robertson's, were Mrs. Waring, of Columbia, and Mrs. Jones, of Charleston; Miss Mattie Aldrich, of Barnwell; Mrs. Bleckley and her daughter, Mrs. Laughlin, of Anderson; Miss Willis, of Charleston; Miss Moses, of Sumter; Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Simpson, of Spartanburg.

After pleasant greetings and a congenial "confab" the delegates were regaled with South Carolina tea, which Mrs. Robertson uses for patriotic reasons and because it has no superior in the tea of the world. "Martha Washington" candy was served and everything was patriotic. The napkins bore the United States flag and the tea cups and plates were real "old blue." The tea was handed by two charming little girls dressed in red, blue and white. They were Susie McGowan, daughter of Patrick McGowan, and Virginia Triana, daughter of the Mexican ambassador. Among the South Carolina ladies present to meet the delegates were Mrs. Robert Sims, of Columbia; Mrs. Edwin DuBose, of Charleston, and Mrs. Patrick McGowan.

The South Carolina delegates will receive attention throughout the week and they have a number of invitations to answer.

The South Carolina delegates present at the D. A. R. convention now being held at Washington are as follows:

State regent, Mrs. Henry W. Richardson; state vice regent, Mrs. Geo. W. Nicholls.

Seneca—Regent, Mrs. Annie W. Mell.

Rock Hill—Regent, Mrs. Eliza F. W. Buist.

Anderson—Regent, Mrs. William Laughlin.

Columbia—Regent, Mrs. L. D. Childs.

Spartanburg—Regent, Mrs. Dora F. Jones.

Aiken—Regent, Mrs. Lillie R. Henderson.

Spartanburg—Regent, Mrs. Mabel F. Simpson.

Yorkville—Regent, Mrs. Samuel M. McNeel.

Barnwell—Regent, Miss Jennie Louise Bates.

Chester—Regent, Miss Charlotte A. Hardin.

Orangeburg—Regent, Mrs. Lurline M. Ligon.

Greenville—Regent, Mrs. Flora P. Dill.

Charleston—Regent, Mrs. Frances M. Jones; delegate, Mrs. H. C. Hughes.

Sumter—Regent, Miss Edith M. DeLorme.

Marion—Regent, Mrs. Henry Buck.

☞ The devil snores right through peal after peal of stolen thunder.

LEE WITH HIS ARMY.

Was Kind and Considerate—Always Refused Whisky.

As the Civil war recedes farther and farther from the present day there looms larger and larger in the story of it the figure of Gen. Robert E. Lee, the adored leader of the Confederate armies. There is scarcely a household of importance in the south in which some story of him is not proudly told, but few illustrate the qualities for which he was beloved better than these which the New Orleans Times-Democrat received from a woman who met the general on his last retreat:

The army had halted two miles from Petersburg, on the road to Appomattox, and General Lee and his staff had been asked to dinner at the home of a well-known jurist at Summit. Iced mint-julep was the favorite beverage of Virginia gentlemen in those days, and when the staff and guests had assembled, just before dinner was announced, the glasses were passed. General Lee was in conversation with a young lady. He offered his glass to her, after the old style, then barely raised it to his lips, and set it down untasted. He took up and drank instead a glass of water. Looking round the room, where all the men were drinking with relish, he said:

"Do you know, I really believe this glass of water refreshes the inner man far more than the julep."

Even his host's famous liquor could not tempt him. It was said that a bottle of brandy presented to the general before the war was returned to the giver unopened after the surrender, with the request that she would use it in some case of need.

At the dinner General Lee took a cup of coffee and added sugar and cream. It was especially fine Java, brought in before the war, and his hostess exclaimed, "Oh General Lee! Do you take cream in your after-dinner coffee."

"I haven't tasted coffee for so long," he said, smiling, "that I am afraid to take it in its full strength.

"It is true," said one of his staff, later. "Every bit of coffee that has come into his hands he has always sent it to the hospital."

As he rode away from Summit on famous horse, Traveler, he passed the home of a poor old woman who had sent her sons to the army. The youngest, whom she called "Dolly," was her special pet. Like every poor southern woman, she believed General Lee was the personal protector of her son. When she saw him she rushed out and caught his bridle.

"O General Lee," she cried, "What's become of my Dolly?"

Although he was even then without hope of saving his army, and was engrossed with plans for making the last desperate stand in the faint possibility of a union with General Johnston, the great leader, divining at once that "Dolly" must be a soldier son, replied in his gentlest manner:

"Madam, if you tell me Dolly's name and the name of his company and command, I will try to find out for you."

His hostess said that as he rode away all the tales she had heard and read of warriors and their deeds rushed to her mind, and she felt that never were their qualities of courtesy and chivalry personated in another as in the south's general.—Youth's Companion.

MIXED METAPHORS.

Oratorical Gems That Went Wrong In the Speaking.

The "Prize Reciter and Speaker" gives the following instances of a mixing of metaphors by some English statesmen:

Mr. Balfour in a speech spoke of "an empty theater of unsympathetic auditors." Lord Curzon remarked that "though not out of the wood we have a good ship." Sir William Hart Dyke told how Mr. Lowther "had caught a big fish in his net—and went to the top of the tree for it." Mr. Asquith remarked that "redistribution is a thorny subject which requires delicate handling or it will tread on some people's toes."

Mr. Brodrick told the commons that "among the many jarring notes heard in this house on military affairs this subject at least must be regarded as an oasis." General Buller declared that "the army is honeycombed with cliques, and kisses go by favor in this web of ax grinders."

In a debate on the London educational bill Walter Long said, "We are told that by such legislation the heart of the country has been shaken to its very foundations." Winston Churchill at a meeting of the Bow and Bromley Conservative association commended certain utterances of Lord Rosebery, but said that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman "had sat so long on the fence that the iron had entered into his soul."

A financial minister assured the commons that "the steps of the government would go hand in hand with the interests of the manufacturer." It was in the lords that the government was warned that the constitutional rights of the people were being "trampled upon by the mailed hand of authority."

Sir George Campbell said "the pale face of the British soldier is the back bone of the British empire" and said certain abuses in India were but "a mere flea bite in the ocean" as compared with others he could name. It was another friend of India who said, "Pass the measure, and the barren wells will become fertile valleys." It was a loyal member who said, "when I go wrong I look round and see our chief leading, and I soon get right again."

But our Hibernian friends will be jealous if we credit them with nothing in this direction.

Mr. Field of Dublin when discussing a bill relating to the shipping of cattle across the Irish sea begged the members "not to look at the subject from a live stock point of view," and it was he who said, "The right honorable gentleman shakes his head, and I'm sorry to hear it." He it was, too, who, when the Irish land bill was being pushed through, said, "The time has now come and is rapidly arising." Another member in a debate objected to "introducing fresh matter already decided." It was Mr. McHugh who declared the government was "ironbound with red tape," but it was an opponent of home rule who regarded a certain concession as "the first stitch in the dismemberment of the empire."

But we must stop or we shall have a repetition of the rebuke administered by a statesman of the Emerald Isle, who declared that "there's no truth in half the lies told about the Irish."

ELECTRICITY'S MOTIVE POWER.

Something About Mechanism That Makes Wheels Go 'Round.

If we could look into the interior of a mechanism in connection with the trucks beneath the car, we should find an apparatus consisting essentially of coils of wire adjusted compactly about an axis, and closely fitted between the poles of a powerful electro-magnet. These coils of wire constitute what is called an armature. When the current is switched on it passes through this armature, as well as through the electro-magnet, and the mutual attractions and repulsions between the magnetic poles and the electric current in the coils of wire cause the armature to revolve with such tremendous energy as to move the train—the motion of its axle being transmitted to an axle of the car wheels by a simple gearing.

The current reaches the car through the third rail, or in the case of the trolley through an overhead or underground wire. All that is essential is that some conducting medium, such as an iron rail or a copper wire, shall form an unbroken connection between the motor apparatus and the central dynamo where the power is generated.

The central dynamo in question will be found, if we visit the power house, to be a ponderous affair, suggestive to the untechnical mind of impenetrable mysteries. Yet in reality it is a device essentially the same in construction with the motor which drives the train. That is to say, its unit of construction consists of a wire-wound armature revolving on an axle and fitted between the poles of an electro-magnet. Here, however, the sequence of phenomena is reversed, for the armature, instead of receiving a current of electricity, is made to revolve by a belt adjusted to its axle and driven by a steam engine. The wire coils of the armature thus made to revolve cut across the so-called lines of magnetic force which connect the two poles of the magnet, and in so doing generate a current of induced electricity, which flows away to reach in due course the third rail of the trolley wire, and ultimately to propel the motor.—Harper's Weekly.

SOMETHING ABOUT OZONE.

Properties of Nature's Wonderful Disinfectant.

All down through the ages, when nothing was known of the microbe cause of putrefaction, and when street cleaners—even house cleaners—were almost unheard of, and streets and houses and men were as dirty as they are now in parts of Russia or China, sickness and death, although frequent, were not as frequent as they would have been without nature's watchful care over her ignorant children.

Although man knew nothing about it, there was a powerful disinfectant being constantly manufactured in the world's laboratory one of air and water, and this substance burned up the refuse which man did not know enough to destroy. This purifier which the chemists discovered only about sixty years ago, is ozone. It is made up of oxygen atoms in a modified combination, and is sometimes called active oxygen because of its strong oxodizing power. It is produced during thunderstorms by the action of the electrical discharges, and is also formed during the rapid evaporation of water. Sea air, therefore, contains it in small amount, and also air in the neighborhood of salt works where a large amount of water is constantly being evaporated in order to get the salt. It is produced artificially by passing an electric spark through oxygen, or, better, by the action of a high-tension current of electricity without sparking. It is also made in decomposing water by electricity. A mixture of ozone and oxygen appears at the positive pole.

Ozone has a peculiar odor (whence its name, from a Greek word meaning to smell), which any one may have noticed who has been near where a lightning bolt struck. It can also be smelled sometimes during a snow storm. It is disinfectant by reason of its active power of oxidizing many substance, especially when they are moist, and so destroying their offensive and poisonous character. It is especially efficacious in destroying the noxious emanations from putrefying substance and thus acting as a deodorizer.

When breathing, even in small quantities, ozone is irritating to the mucous membranes, and it is believed by some physicians that many of the respiratory troubles and the influenza that prevail in damp winter weather are owing to a weakening of the resistant powers of the mucous membranes through the respired oxygen.—Youth's Companion.

FACTS ABOUT TIME.—Time is hard to define. According to the best poets time has a heavy foot, a tooth, a forelock and breakable legs. It travels in divers places; it ambles, trots, gallops, runs, rolls and stands still; it has whips; it crops roses. So far it seems like a horse. But it has a forefinger, also a reckless hand that writes wrinkles. This explodes the horse theory. Furthermore, time flies. Hence, "a bird of a time." Time is money; being also a bird, time is a gold eagle perhaps; money is the root of all evil and procrastination is the thief of time. Therefore, procrastination is (1) a chicken thief, (2) a good thing.

The wickedness of time is beyond question. It is vindictive. "I wasted time," mourns King Richard, "and now doth time waste me." Time waits for no man. Time shall throw a dart at thee. Time robs us of our joys. Time will tell. Time is unthinking. Time presses its debtors. The time is out of joint, and well may it be, considering what a nuisance it is.

Time is a sea, a sandy beach, a bank, a shoal and an abyss. Also it is a whirligig, which seems odd when we recall that time is quiet as a nun. Time is good, bad, high, fine, rough, hot, Christmas, spring, waltz, common and lovely. Among good times may be mentioned quitting time and dinner time.—Newark News.

HOW INDIANS COMMUNICATE.

News Travels With Wonderful Rapidity Among the Red Men.

The rapidity with which the news of orders given out from the Union Indian agency and the Dawes commission spreads to the remotest corners of the Creek nation is a continual source of wonder to the Federal officials.

When, says the Kansas City Journal, the regulation compelling Indians to accept the pay for their land in installments of $10 a month was announced, it seemed that every Indian in the Creek county knew it at once, for the petitions for sale dropped off immediately. A few days ago, when the order was revoked and the Indian was allowed to pay for his land at the rate of $50 per month, practically everybody knew it the next day, and business in the Creek land sales department suddenly became lively again.

When it is remembered that there are several thousand full blood Indians in the Creek nation who cannot speak or read a word of English, and who have no way of learning the news of the day except by word of mouth, the speed with which intelligence is communicated to them is most remarkable. Most of the full bloods live in the hills and mountains, far from railroads, and in sections where daily or even weekly newspapers are seldom or never seen.

General Pleasant Porter, chief of the Creek nation, and the best informed man in the tribe, when asked to explain the phenomenon, said significantly:

"It may be telepathy. Let me ask you a question. How does the buzzard flying through the air learn that an animal has been killed and why are there hundreds of them on the scene in less time than it takes to tell about it? You may call it instinct, or anything else you please, but the Indians keep as well posted on news that interests them as the newspaper reading white people.

"My people have formed the habit of communicating whatever interests them to their neighbors and asking them to pass it on. Every train that leaves Muskogee is loaded with Indians who know personally of an order. They pass the word along, and it spreads like wildfire. In the early days the Creeks had regular couriers who carried the news. One of these would visit a town, and at sundown the people would gather around him and hear the information he had to impart. The town king would then detail some one to pass it on to the members of the next town or tribe, and the same method would be repeated.

"I have known," said the chief, growing reminiscent, "of foot carriers traveling 100 miles a day with important messages. One morning during the Creek rebellion I sent a messenger out to get volunteers for my army, and before the sun set 1,200 men came into my camp.

"Warriors had a way of announcing the approach of an enemy by giving war whoops. If the yells followed closely one after another the enemy was near. One prolonged whoop indicated that the enemy was many miles distant, with no danger of immediate attack."

THE MEXICAN DOLLAR.

Effect Upon Its Value In the Orient of Change to Gold Standard.

Mexico's change from the silver to the gold standard has brought about some knotty problems for Secretary Shaw to solve, and he has just finished wrestling with one of the worst of them. The Mexican silver dollar is the paramount coin in Asia. It is the basis for about all the money standard there is in China and many of the other Asiatic countries. Heretofore all imports coming to the United States from those sections of the world have been assessed for customs collections upon a basis of their value in the bullion of the Mexican silver, not face value. The bullion value of the silver in one of these dollars is arrived at by the United States authorities by an average of the market price of silver for the three months preceding the date of a circular that is issued at frequent intervals by the secretary of the treasury fixing the value of foreign coins.

Mexico, as is well-known, will enter upon the gold standard May 1, and has fixed a value upon her silver dollars, based upon its redemption in gold. This value is quite different from the bullion value of the same coin in Asia. Secretary Shaw recently decided that imports coming to the United States from Mexico should pay customs duty at their valuation in the Mexican dollar as fixed by Mexico, but this would never do upon goods coming from the East, as it would make a big difference to importers and to the United States. Mexico herself will not redeem foreign dollars at the value she has recently placed upon them, and law will prohibit their importation at all or fix heavy import duties upon them, thereby preventing a return to Mexico of the flood of silver dollars that are in circulation in China and the east.

Secretary Shaw has sent a notification to the state department that the government would continue its policy of fixing the valuation of the Mexican dollar in the east at its bullion value, and that goods coming from the East would be invoiced upon that basis.

Secretary Shaw says that what are called Chinese-Mexican chop dollars, and which circulate so freely in the East, are not made by the Mexican government and will not be redeemed by that government. Consequently the United States can not accept them at anything except their bullion value.

THE YEGGMAN'S WARNING.—One of the burglars, who was a member of the gang convicted in Charleston the other day, gives out a statement in which he says that South Carolina is the easiest state in the country for cracking safes in postoffices and banks. He refers, of course, to the rural districts, where there is little police protection, but what he says is unquestionably true. We should profit, however, by his confession and make it more difficult hereafter for burglars who are after easy prey. The record shows that too many crimes of this character have been committed. Being wise, and having some regard for Federal law, the robbers endeavor to leave the postoffices alone, thus keeping the secret service men off the trail.—Greenville News.