

And off it drops, a black bundle that rolls for twenty yards. CONSTRUCTOR SERVICE CONTRACTOR SERVICE CONTRACTOR SERVICE CONTRACTOR SERVICE CONTRACTOR SERVICE CONTRACTOR SER

## "LABOR, TRADE AND CAPITAL"

By O. HENRY

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a corner of Provenzano's restaurant, Jeff Peters was explaining to me the three kinds of graft.

Every winter Jeff comes to New York to eat spaghetti, to watch the shipping in East river from the depths of his chinchilla overcoat, and to lay in a supply of Chicago-made clothing one of the Fulton street stores. During the other three seasons he may be found further west-his range is from Spokane to Tampa. In his profession he takes a pride which he supports and defends with a serious and unique philosophy of ethics. His profession is no new one. He is an incorporated, uncapitalized, unlimited asylum for the reception of the rest less and unwise dollars of his fellow

In the wilderness of stone in which Jeff seeks his annual lonely holiday he is glad to palaver of his many adventures, as a boy will whistle after sundown in a wood. Wherefore mark on my calendar the time of his coming, and open a question of privi-lege at Provenzano's concerning the little wine-stained table in the corner tween the rakish rubber plant and the framed palazzio della something

'There are two kinds of grafts.' said Jeff, "that ought to be wiped out by law. I mean Wall street speculation, and burglary

'Nearly everybody will agree with you as to one of them," said I, with a

"Well, burglary ought to be wiped out, too," said Jeff; and I wondered whether the laugh had been redun-

'About three months ago," said "it was my privilege to become familiar with a sample of each of the aforesaid branches of illegitimate art. I was sine qua grata with a member of the housebreakers' union and one of the John D. Napoleons of finance at same time.

"Interesting combination," said I, with a yawn. "Did I tell you I bagged a duck and a ground-squirrel at one shot last week over in the Ramapos? I knew well how to draw Jeff's stories.

"Let me tell you first about these barnacles that clog the wheels of society by poisoning the springs of rectitude with their upas-like eye," said Jeff, with the pure gleam of the muckraker in his own.

"As I said, three months ago I got into bad company. There are two times in a man's life when he does this—when he's dead broke, and when he's rich

Now and then the most legitimate business runs out of luck. It was out in Arkansas I made the wrong turn at a cross-road, and drives into this town of Peavine by mistake. It seems I had already assaulted the disfigured Peavine the spring of the year before. I had sold \$600 worth of young fruit trees there— plums, cherries, peaches and pears. The Peaviners were keeping an eye on the country road and hoping I might pass that way again. I drove down Main street as the Crystal Palace drug store before I realized I had commit ted ambush upon myseif and my white horse Bill.

The Peaviners took me by surprise and Bill by the bridle and began a conversation that wasn't entirely disassociated with the subject of fruit A committee of 'em ran some trace chains through the armholes of my vest, and escorted me through their gardens and orchards.

Their fruit trees hadn't lived up to their labels. Most of 'em had turned out to be persimmons and dogwoods, with a grove or two of black-jacks and poplars. The only one that showed any signs of bearing anything was a fine young cottonwood that had put forth a hornet's nest and half of an old corset-cover.

"The Peaviners protracted our fruitless stroll to the edge of town. They took my watch and money on ac-count; and they kept Bill and the wagon as hostages. They said the first time one of them dogwood trees put forth an Amsden's June peach I might come back and get my things.

Across our two dishes of spaghetti, | Then they took off the trace chain and jerked their thumbs in the direction of the Rocky mountains; and I struck a Lewis and Clark lope for the

swollen rivers and impenetrable for-

'When I regained conscientiousness I. found myself walking into an unidentified town on the A., T. & S. F. The Peaviners hadn't left anything in my pockets except a plug of chewing—they wasn't after my life -and that saved it. I bit off a chunk and sits down on a pile of ties by the track to recogitate my sensations of thought and perspicacity.

"And then along comes a fast freight which slows up a little at the town; and off of it drops a black bundle that rolls for 20 yards in a cloud of dust and then gets up and begins to spit soft coal and interjections. see it is a young man, broad across the face, dressed more for Pullmans than freights, and with a cheerful kind of smile in spite of it all that made Phoebe Snow's job look like a chimney-sweep's.
"'Fall off?' says I.

"'Nunk,' says he. 'Got off. Arrived t my destination. What town is this?

'Haven't looked it up on the map yet,' says I. I got in about five min-utes before you did. How does it strike you?"

'Hard,' says he, twisting one of his arms around. 'I believe that shoulder-no, it's all right." He stoops over to brush the dust

off his clothes, when out of his pocket drops a fine, nine-inch burglar's steel He picks it up and looks at me sharp, and then grins and holds

'Brother,' says he, 'greetings. Didn't I see you in southern Missouri last summer selling colored sand at half-a-dollar a teaspoonful to put into lamps to keep the oil from exploding?"

"'Oil, says I, 'never explodes. It's the gas that forms that explodes.' But

I shakes hands with him, anyway.
"'My name's Bill Bassett," says he to me, 'and if you'll call it professional instead of conceit, I'll inform you that you have the pleasure of meeting the best burglar that ever set gum-shoe on ground drained by the Mississippi river.

"Well, me and this Bill Bassett sits on the ties and exchanges brags as artists in kindred lines will do. It seems he didn't have a cent, either, and we went into close caucus. He explained why an able burglar sometimes had to travel on freights by me that a servant girl had played him false in Little Rock, and was making a quick get-away.

"'It's part of my business," Bill Bassett, 'to play up to the ruffles when I want to make a riffle as a Raffles. 'Tis loves that makes the bit go 'round. Show me a house with the swag in it and a pretty parlor-maid, and you might as well call the silver melted down and sold, and me spelling truffles and that Chateau trick the napkin under my chin, while the police are calling it an inside job just because the old lady's nephew teaches a bible class. I first make an impres sion on the girl,' says Bill, 'and when she lets me inside I make an impreson the locks. But this one in Little Rock done me,' says he. saw me taking a trolley ride with another girl, and when I came 'round on the night she was to leave the door open for me it was fast. And I had keys made for the doors upstairs. But, no sir. She had sure cut off my locks She was a Delilah,' says Bill Bassett.

"It seems that Bill tried to break anyhow with his jimmy, but the girl emitted a succession of bravura noises like the top-riders of a tally-ho. and Bill had to take all the hurdles between there and the depot. had no baggage they tried hard to check his departure, but he made a train that was just pulling out.

'Well,' says Bill Bassett, when we had exchanged memoirs of our dead lives, 'I could eat. This town don't look like it was kept under a Yale Suppose we commit some mild atrocity that will bring in temporary expense .money. I don't suppose

you've brought along any hair tonic or rolled gold watch chains, or similar law-defying swindles that you could sell on the plaza to the pikers of the

paretic populace, have you?'
"'No,' says I, 'I left an elegant line of Patagonian diamond earrings and rainy-day sunbursts in my valise at Peavine. But they're to stay there till some of them blackgum trees begin to glut the market with yellow clings and Japanese plums. I reckon we can't count on them unless we take Luther Burbank in for a partner.

"'Very well,' says Bassett, 'we'll do the best we can. Maybe after dark I'll borrow a hairpin from some lady. and open the Farmers & Drovers Marine bank with it.'

"While we was talking, up pulls a passenger train to the depot nearby. A person in a high hat gets off on the wrong side of the train and comes tripping down the track towards us. He was a little, fat man with a big nose and rat's eyes, but dressed pensive, and carrying a hand-satchel careful, as if it had eggs or railroad bonds in it. He passes by us and keeps on down the track, not appearing to notice the town.

"'Come on,' says Bill Bassett to me, starting after him.

"'Where?' I asks.

"'Lordy!' says Bill, 'had you forgot you was in the desert? Didn't you see Col. Manna drop down right before your eyes? Don't you hear the rustling of Gen. Raven's wings? I'm surprised at you, Elijah.'

"We overtook the stranger in the edge of some woods, and, as it was after sundown and in a quiet place, nobody saw us stop him. Bill takes the silk hat off his head and brushes it with his sleeve and puts it back. 'What does this mean, sir?' says

"'When I wore one of these,' says Bill, 'and felt embarrassed, I always done that. Not having one now I had to use yours. I hardly know how to begin, sir, in explaining our busi-

ness with you, but I guess we'll try your pockets first.' "Bill Bassett felt in all of them, and

looked disgusted. "'Not even a watch.' says he Ain't you ashamed of yourself, you whited sculpture? Going about dressed like a head-waiter, and financed like a You haven't even got carfare count. What did you do with your transfer?

"The man speaks up and says he has no assets or valuables of any sort. But Bassett takes his hand-satchel and opens it. Out comes some collars and socks and half a page of a news paper clipped out. Bill reads the clippings careful, and holds out his hand to the held-up party.

"'Brother,' says he, 'greetings! Accept the apologies of friends. I am Bill Bassett, the burglar. Mr. Peters, you must make the acquaintance of Mr. Alfred E. Ricks. Shake hands Peters,' says Bill, 'stands about halfway between me and you, Mr. Ricks, in the line of havoc and corruption. He always gives something the money he gets. I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Ricks—you and Mr. This is the first time I ever attended a full gathering of the na tional synod of sharks-housebreak ing, swindling and financiering all rep resented. Please examine Mr. Ricks' credentials, Mr. Peters.'

"The piece of newspaper that Bill Bassett handed me had a good picture of this Ricks on it. It was a Chicago paper, and it had obloquies of Ricks in every paragraph. By reading it over I harvested the intelligence that said alleged Ricks had laid off all that portion of the state of Florida that lies under water into town lots and sold 'em to alleged innocent investors from his magnificently furnished offices in Chicago. After he had taken in a hundred thousand or so dollars one of these fussy purchasers that are always making trouble (I've had 'em actually try gold watches I've sold em with acid) took a cheap excursion down to the land where it is always just before supper to look at his lot and see if it didn't need a new paling or two on the fence, and market a few lemons in time for the Christmas present trade. He hires a surveyor to find his lot for him. They run the line out and find the flourish of Paradise Hollow, so advertised, to be about 40 rods and 16 poles S., 27 degrees E. of the middle of Lake Okeechobee. This man's lot was under 36 feet of water, and, besides, had been preempted so long by the alligators and gars that his title looked fishy.

"Naturally, the man goes back to Chicago and makes it as hot for Alfred E. Ricks as the morning after a prediction of snow by the weather bureau. Ricks defied the allegation, but he couldn't deny the alligators One morning the papers come out with a column about it, and Ricks comes out by the fire-escape. It seems the alleged authorities had beat him to the safe-deposit box where he kept his winnings, and Ricks has to westward ho! with only feetwear dozen 151/2 English pokes in his shopping bag. He happened to have some mileage left in his book, and that took him as far as the town in the wilderness where he was spilled out on me and Bill Bassett as Elijah III, with not a raven in sight for any of

"Then this Alfred E. Ricks lets out a squeak that he is hungry, too, and passes up the hypothesis that he is good for the value, let alone the price, of a meal. And so, there was the three of us, representing, if we had a mind to draw syllogisms and parabolas, labor and trade and capital, Now, when trade has no capital there isn't a dicker to be made. And when capital has no money there's a stagnation in steak and onions. That put it up

to the man with the jimmy.
"'Brother bushrangers,' says Bill Bassett, 'never yet, in trouble, did I

desert a pal. Hard by, in yon wood, I seem to see unfurnished lodgings. Let us go there and wait till dark.'

"There was an old, deserted cabin in the grove, and we three took possession of it. After dark Bill Bassett tells us to wait, and goes out for half an hour. He comes back with a armful of bread and spareribs and pies.

'Panhandled 'em at a farmhouse on Washita avenue,' says he. 'Eat, drink, and be leary.'
"The full moon was coming up

bright, so we sat on the floor of the cabin and ate in the light of it. And this Bill Bassett begins to brag.

"'Sometimes,' says he, with his mouth full of country produce, 'I lose all patience with you people think you are higher up in the profes sion than I am. Now, what could either of you do in the present emergency to set us on our feet again? Could you do it, Ricksy?'

"'I must confess, Mr. Bassett,' says Ricks, speaking nearly inaudible out of a slice of pie, 'that at this immediate juncture I could not, perhaps, promote an enterprise to relieve the situation. Large operations, such as I direct, naturally require careful preparation in advance. I—'
"'I know, Ricksy,' breaks in Bill

'You needn't finish. You need \$500 to make the first payment on a blonde typewriter, and roomsful of quartered oak furniture. And you need \$500 more for advertising contracts. And you need two weeks' time for the fish to begin to bite. Your line of relief would be about as useful in an emergency advocating municipal ownership to cure a man suffocated by 80-cent gas And your graft ain't much swifter Brother Peters,' he winds up.

"'Oh,' says I, 'I haven't seen you turn anything into gold with your wand yet, Mr. Good Fairy. 'Most anyody could rub the magic ring for a little left-over victuals.'

"That was only getting the pump kin ready, says Bassett, braggy and cheerful. 'The coach and six'll drive up to the door before you know it, Miss Cinderella. Maybe you've got some scheme under your sleeve-holders that will give us a start.'
"'Son,' says I, 'I'm fifteen years

older than you are, and young enough to yet take out an endowment policy been broke before. We can se the lights of that town not half a mile away. I learned under Montague Silver, the greatest street man that ever spoke from a wagon. There are hundreds of men walking those streets this moment with grease spots on their clothes. Give me a gasoline lamp, a dry goods box, and a two-dolbar of white castile soap, cut into

"'Where's your two dollars?' snickered Bill Bassett into my discourse There was no use arguing with that burglar.

'No,' he goes on; 'you're both babes-in-the-wood. Finance has closed the mahogany desk, and trade has put the shutters up. Buth of you look to abor to start the wheels going. right. You admit it. To-night I'll show you what Bill Bassett can do

'Bassett tells me and Ricks not to leave the cabin till he comes back, even if it's daylight, and then he starts off toward town, whistling

"This Alfred E. Ricks pulls off his shoes and his coat, lays a silk handkerchief over his hat, and lays down on the floor.

'I think I will endeavor to secure a little slumber,' he squeaks. day has been fatiguing. Good-night, my dear Mr. Peters.' 'My regards to Morpheus,' says I.

I think I'll sit up a while." "About two o'clock as near as

could guess by my watch in Peavine home comes our laboring man and kicks up Ricks, and calls us to the streak of bright moonlight shining in



Packages of \$1,000 each.

the cabin door. Then he spreads out five packages of \$1,000 each on the floor, and begins to cackle over the nest-egg like a hen.

"Til tell you a few things about that town,' says he. 'It's named Rocky Springs, and they're building a Masonic temple, and it looks like the Democratic candidate for mayor is going to get soaked by a Pop, and Judge Tucker's wife, who has been down with pleurisy, is some better. I had to talk on these liliputian thesises before I could get a siphon in the fountain of knowledge that I was after. And there's a bank there called the Lumberman's Fidelity and Plowman's Savings Institution. It closed for business yesterday with \$23,000 cash on hand. It will open this morning with \$18,000-all silver--that's the reason I didn't bring more. There are, trade and capital. Now, will

My young friend,' says Alfred hicks, holding up his hands, have you robbed this bank? Dear me,

"'You couldn't call it that,' says Bassett. "Robbing" zounds harsh. All I had to do was to find out what That town is so stred it was on. That town is so quiet that I could stand on the corner and hear the tumblers clicking in that safe lock-"right to 45; left twice to 80; right once to 60; left to 15"-as plain as the Yale captain giving orders in the football dialect. Now, boys,' says Bassett, 'this is an early rising town. They tell me the citizens are all up and stirring before daylight. I asked what for, and they said be-cause breakfast was ready at that time. And what of merry Robin It must be Yoicks! and away with the tinkers' chorus. I'll stake you. How much do you want? Speak

up, Capital.'
"'My dear young friend,' says this ground squirrel of a Ricks, standing on his hind legs and juggling nuts in his paws. 'I have friends in Denver who would assist me. If I had a hundred dollars I-

"Bassett unpins a package of the currency and throws five twenties to Ricks

"'Trade, how much?' he says to

"'Put your money up, Labor,' says I. 'I never yet drew upon honest toil for its hard-earned pittance. lars I get are surplus ones that are



Well, burglary ought to be wiped

burning the pockets of damfools and greenhorns. When I stand on a street corner and sell a solid gold diamond ring to a yap for three dollars, I make just \$2.60. And I know he's going to give it to a girl in return for all the benefits accruing from a \$125 ring. His profits are \$122. Which of us is the biggest fakir?' 'And when you sell a poor woman

a pinch of sand for 50 cents to keep her lamp from exploding,' says Bassett, 'what do you figure her gross earnings to be, with sand at 40 cents

'Listen,' says I. 'I instruct her to keep her lamp clean and well filled. If she does that it can't bust. And with the sand in it she knows it can't. and she don't worry. It's a kind of industrial Christian Science. She pays 50 cents, and gets both Rockefeller and Mrs. Eddy on the job. It ain't everybody that can let the gold-dust twins do their work.'

"Alfred E. Ricks all but licks the dust off of Bill Bassett's shoes.

"'My dear young friend,' says he, 'I will never forget your generosity. Heaven will reward you. But let me implore you to turn from your ways

of violence and crime.'
"'Mousie,' says Bill, 'the hole in the wainscoting for yours. Your dogmas and inculcations sound to me like the last words of a bicycle pump. What has your high moral, elevator-service system of pillage brought you to? Penuriousness and want. Even Brother Peters, who insists upon contaminating the art of robbery with theories of commerce and trade, admitted he was on the lift. Both of you live by the gilded rule. Brother Peters,' says Bill, 'you'd better choose a slice of this embalmed currency You're welcome.'

"I told Bill Bassett once more to put his money in his pocket. I never had the respect for burglary that some people have. I always gave something for the money I took, even if it only some little trifle for a sou venir to remind 'em not to get caught again.

"And then Alfred E. Ricks grovels at Bill's feet again, and bids us adieu. He says he will have a team at a farmhouse, and drive to the station below, and take the train for Denver. It salubrified the atmosphere when that lamentable boll-worm took his departure. He was a disgrace to every nonindustrial profession in the coun With all his big schemes and fine offices he had wound up unable even to get an honest meal except by the kindness of a strange and maybe unscrupulous burglar. I was glad to see him go, though I felt a little sorry for him, now that he was ruined for ever. What could such a man do without a big capital to work with? Why, Alfred E. Ricks, as we left him, was as helpless as a turtle on its back. He couldn't have worked a scheme to beat a little girl out of a penny slate

nencil. "When me and Bill Bassett was left alone I did a little sleight-of-mind turn in my head with a trade secret at the Thinks I, I'll show this Mr. Burglar Man the difference between business and labor. He had hurt some of my professional self-adulation by casting his Persians upon commerce and trade.

"'I won't take any of your money as a gift, Mr. Bassett,' says I to him, 'but if you'll pay my expenses as a traveling companion until we get out of the danger zone of the immoral def icit you have caused in this town's finances to-night, I'll be obliged.

Bill Bassett agreed to that, and we hiked westward as soon as

"When we got to a town in Arizona called Los Perros I suggested that we once more try our luck on terra cotta. That was the home of Montague Silver, my old instructor, now retired from business. I knew Monty would stake me to web money if I could show him a fly buzzing 'round in the locality. Bill Bassett said all towns looked alike to him as he worked mainly in the dark. So we got off the train in Los Perros, a fine little town in the silver region.

"I had an elegant little sure thing in the way of a commercial slungshot that I intended to hit Bassett behind the ear with. I wasn't going to take his money while he was asleep, but I was going to leave him with a lottery ticket that would represent in experience to him \$5,755—I think that was the amount he had when he got off the train. But the first time I hinted to him about an investment, he turns on me and disencumbers himself of the following terms and ex-

pressions:
"'Brother Peters,' says he, 'it ain't a bad idea to go into an enterprise of some kind, as you suggest. I think I will. But if I do it will be such a cold proposition that nobody but Robert E. Peary and Charlie Fairbanks will be

able to sit on the board of directors." "'I thought you might want to turn your money over,' says I.

"'I do,' says he, 'frequently. I can't sleep on one side all night. I'll tell you, Brother Peters,' says he, 'I'm going to start a poker room. I don't seem to care for the humdrum in swindling, such as peddling egg-beaters and working off breakfast food on Barnum and Bailey for sawdust to strew in their circus rings. But the gambling business,' says he, 'from the profitable side of the table is a good compromise between swiping silver spoons and selling penwipers at a Waldorf-Astoria charity bazaar.'

'Then,' says I, 'Mr. Bassett, you don't care to talk over my little business proposition?'

"'Why,' says he, 'do you know, you can't get a Pasteur institute to start up within 50 miles of where I live. bite so seldom.'

"So Bassett rents a room over saloon and looks around for some furniture and chromos. The same night I went to Monty Silver's house, and he let me have \$200 on my prospects. Then I went to the only store in Los Perros that sold playing cards and bought every deck in the house. The next morning when the store opened I was there, bringing all the cards back with me. I said that my partner that was going to back me in the game had changed his mind: and 1 vanted to sell the cards back again. The storekeeper took 'em at half

"Yes, I was \$75 loser up to that But while I had the cards that time night I marked every one in every deck. That was labor. And then trade and commerce had their innings, and the bread I had cast upon the waters began to come bar in the form of cottage pudding with wine sauce.

"Of course I was among the first to buy chips at Bill Bassett's game. He had bought the only cards there was to be had in town; and I knew the back of every one of them better than I know the back of my head when the barber shows me my haircut in the two mirrors

When the game closed I had the six thousand and a few odd dollars, and all Bill Bassett had was the wanderlust and a black cat le had bought for a mascot. Bill shook hands with me when I left.

'Brother Peters,' says he, 'I have no business being in business. I was preordained to labor. When a No. 1 burglar tries to make a James out of his jimmy he perpetrates an improfundity. You have a well-oiled and efficacious system of luck at cards, says he. 'Peace go with you.' And I never afterward sees Bill Bassett again.

"Well, Jeff," said I, when the Autolycan adventurer seemed to have divulged the gist of his tale, "I hope you took care of the money. That would be a respecta—that is a considerable working capital if you should choose some day to settle down to some sort of regular business."

"Me?" said Jeff, virtuously. "You ean bet I've taken care of that six thousand." He tapped his coat over the region

of his chest exultantly.
"Gold mining stock," he explained, "every cent of it. Shares par value one dollar. Bound to go up 500 per cent. within a year. Non-assessable.
The Blue Gopher mine. Just discovered a month ago. Better get in yourself if you've any spare dollars on hand.'

"Sometimes," said I, "these mines are not-

"Oh, this one's solid as an old goose," said Jeff. "Fifty thousand dollars' worth of ore in sight, and ten per cent. monthly earnings guaran-

He drew a long envelope from his pocket and cast it on the table.

"Always carry it with me," said he. "So the burglar can't carrupt or the capitalist break in and water it." I looked at the beautifully engraved

certificate of stock. "In Colorado, I see," said I. "And, by the way, Jeff, what was the name of the little man who went to Denver -the one you and Bill met at the sta-

"Alfred E. Ricks." said Jeff. "was the toad's designation."

"I see," said I, "the president of this mining company signs himself A. L. Fredericks. I was wondering-

"Let me see that stock," said Jeff quickly, almost snatching it from me To mitigate, even though slightly. the embarrassment of the moment I summoned the waiter and ordered another bottle of the Barbera. I thought it was the least I could do.