

The Real Man

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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J. MONTAGUE SMITH, LATE OF LAWRENCEVILLE, DISCOVERERS THAT AS "JOHN SMITH," A CONSTRUCTION CAMP WORKER, HE CAN'T CONCEAL HIS PAST LIFE

Synopsis—J. Montague Smith, cashier of the Lawrenceville Bank and Trust company, bachelor society leader engaged to marry Verda Richlander, heiress, is wrongfully accused of dishonesty by Watrous Dunham, his employer, and urged to be a scapegoat for the crooked accuser. Smith strikes Dunham, leaves him for dead and flees the state. He turns up a tramp some time later at an irrigation dam construction camp in the Rocky mountains and as John Smith gets a rough job.

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

"I'm afraid he'd have to loosen up on his record a little before we could bring him in here. Badly as we're needing a money man, we can hardly afford to put a 'John Smith' into the saddle—at least not without knowing what his other name used to be."

"No; of course not. I guess, after all, he's only a 'lame duck,' like a good many of the rest of them. Day before yesterday, Burdell, the deputy sheriff, was out at the camp looking the gangs over for the fellow who broke into Lannigan's place last Saturday night. When he came into the office Smith was busy with an estimate, and Burdell went up and touched him on the shoulder, just to let him know that it was time to wake up. Suffering cats! It took three of us to keep him from breaking Burdell in two and throwing him out of the window!"

"That looks rather bad," was the president's comment. Col. Dexter Baldwin had been the first regularly elected sheriff of Timanyoni county in the early days and he knew the symptoms. "Was Burdell wearing his star where it could be seen?"

The engineer nodded. "What explanation did Smith make?"

"Oh, he apologized like a gentleman, and said he was subject to little nervous attacks like that when anybody touched him unexpectedly. He took Burdell over to Pete Simm's shack saloon and bought him a drink. Perkins, the timekeeper, says he's going to get a megaphone so he can give due notice in advance when he wants to call Smith's attention."

The colonel pulled out a drawer in the desk, found his box of diplomatic cigars and passed it to the engineer, saying: "Light up a sure-enough good one, and tell me what you think Smith has been doing back yonder in the other country."

Williams took the cigar but he shied at the conundrum. "Ask me something easy," he said. "I've stacked up a few guesses. He's from the middle West—as the Bible says, his 'speech betrayeth' him—and he's had a good job of some kind; the kind that required him to keep abreast of things. If there's anything in looks, you'd say he wasn't a thief or an embezzler, and yet it's pretty apparent that he's been used to handling money in chunks and making it work for its living. I've put it up that there's a woman in it. Perhaps the other fellow got in his way, or came up behind him and touched him unexpectedly, or something of that sort. Anyway, I'm not going to believe he's a crooked crook until I have to."

Colonel Baldwin helped himself to one of his own cigars, and the talk went back to business. In the irrigation project, Williams was a stockholder as well as chief of construction, and Baldwin had more than once found him a safe adviser. There was need for counsel. The Timanyoni Ditch company was in a rather hazardous condition financially, and the president and Williams rarely met without coming sooner or later to a thrashing out of the situation.

The difficulties were those which are apt to confront a small and local enterprise when it is so unfortunate as to get in the way of larger undertakings. Colonel Baldwin, and a group of his neighbors on the north side of the river, were reformed cattlemen and horse breeders. Instead of drifting further west in advance of the incoming tide of population following the coming of the railroad, they had availed themselves of their homestead rights and had taken up much of the grass land in the favorable valleys, irrigating it at first with water taken out of the river in private or neighborhood ditches.

Later on came the sheep-feeding period, and after that the utilization of larger crop-raising areas. The small ditches proving inadequate for these, Colonel Baldwin had formed a stock company among his neighbors in the grass lands and his friends in Brewster for the building of a substantial dam in the eastern hills. The project had seemed simple enough in the beginning. The stock was sold for cash and each stockholder would be a participating user of the water. Williams, who had been a United States reclamation man before he came to the Timanyoni, had made careful estimates, and the stock subscription provided money enough to cover the cost of the dam and the main ditch.

After some little bargaining, the dam site and the overflow land for the reservoir lake had been secured, and the work was begun. Out of a clear sky, however, came trouble and harassment. Alien holders of mining claims in the reservoir area turned up and demanded damages. Some few home-owners who had promised to sign quitclaims changed their minds and sued for relief, and after the work was well under way it appeared that there was a cloud on the title of the dam site itself. All of these clashing were carried into court, and the rancher promoters found themselves confronting invisible enemies and obstacle-raisers at every turn.

The legal fight, as they soon found out, cost much money in every phase of it; and now, when the dam was scarcely more than half completed, a practically empty treasury was staring them in the face. There was no disguising the fact that a crisis was approaching, a financial crisis which no one among the amateur promoters was big enough to cope with.

"We've got to go in deeper, colonel; there is nothing else to do," was the engineer's summing up of the matter at the close of the conference. "The snow is melting pretty rapidly on the range now, and when we get the June rise we'll stand to lose everything we have if we can't keep every wheel turning to get ready for the high water."

Baldwin was holding his cigar between his fingers and scowling at it as if it had mortally offended him.

"Assessments on the stock, you mean?" he said. "I'm afraid our crowd won't stand for that. A good part of it is ready to lie down in the harness right now."

"How about a bond issue?" asked the engineer.

"What do we, or any of us, know about bond issues? Why, we know barely enough about the business at the start to chip in together and buy us a charter and go to work on a plan a little bit bigger than the neighborhood ditch idea. You couldn't float bonds in Timanyoni Park, and we're none of us foxy enough to go East and float 'em."

"I guess that's right, too," admitted Williams. "Besides, with the stock gone off the way it has, it would take a mighty fine-haired financial sharp to sell bonds."

"What's that?" demanded the president. "Who's been selling any stock?"

"Back Gardner, for one; and that man Bolling, up at the head of Little creek, for another. Maxwell, the railroad superintendent, told me about it, and he says that the price offered, and accepted, was thirty-nine."

"Dad burn a cuss with a yellow streak in him!" rasped the Missouri colonel. "We had a fair and square agreement among ourselves that if anybody got scared he was to give the rest of us a chance to buy him out. Who bought from these welters?"

"Maxwell didn't know that. He said it was done through Kinzie's bank. From what I've heard on the outside, I'm inclined to suspect that Crawford Stanton was the buyer."

"Stanton, the real-estate man?"

"The same."

Again the president stared thoughtfully at the glowing end of his cigar. "There's another of the confounded mysteries," he growled. "Who is Crawford Stanton, and what is he here for? I know what he advertises, but everybody in Brewster knows that he hasn't made a living dollar in real estate since he came here last summer. Williams, do you know, I'm beginning to suspect that there is a mighty big nigger in our little wood pile?"

"You mean that all these stubborn holdups have been bought and paid for? You'll remember that is what Billy Starbuck tried to tell us when the first of the missing mining-claim owners began to shout at us."

"Starbuck has a long head, and what he doesn't know about mining claims in this part of the country wouldn't fill a very big book. I remember he said there had never been any prospecting done in the upper Timanyoni gulches, and now you'd think half the people in the United States had been nosing around up there with a pick and shovel at one time or another. But it was a thing that Starbuck told me no longer ago than yesterday that set me to thinking." Baldwin went on. "As you know, the old Escalante Spanish grant corners over in the western part of this park. When the old grants were made, they were ruled off on the map with-

out reference to mountain ranges or other natural barriers."

Williams nodded. "Well, as I say, one corner of the Escalante reaches over the Hophras and out into the park, covering about eight or ten square miles of the territory just beyond us on our side of the river. Starbuck told me yesterday that a big Eastern colonization company had got a bill through congress alienating that tract."

The chief of construction bounded out of his chair and began to walk the floor. "By George!" he said; and again: "By George! That's what we're up against, colonel! Where will those fellows get the water for their land? There is no site for a dam lower down than ours, and anyway, that land lies too high to be watered by anything but a high-line ditch!"

"Nice little brace game, isn't it?" growled Baldwin. "If we hadn't been a lot of hayseed amateurs, we might have found out long ago that someone was running in a cold deck on us. What's your notion? Are we done up, world without end?"

Williams' laugh was grim. "What we need, colonel, is to go out on the street and yell for a doctor," he said. "It's beginning to look as if we had acquired a pretty bad case of malignant strangle-itis."

Baldwin ran his fingers through his hair and admitted that he had lost his sense of humor.

"This Eastern crowd is trying to freeze us out, to get our dam and reservoir and ditch rights for their Escalante scheme. When they do, they'll turn around and sell us water—at fifty dollars an inch, or something like that!"

"What breaks my heart is that we haven't been able to surround the sure-enough fact while there was still time to do something," lamented the ex-reclamation man. "The first thing we know, Stanton will own a majority of the stock and be voting us all out of a job. You'll have to come around to my suggestion, after all, and advertise for a doctor." It was said of the chief of construction that he would have joked on his death-bed, and, as a follower for the joke, he added: "Why don't you call Smith in and give him the job?"

"You don't really mean that, Williams, do you?" growled the colonel. "No, I didn't mean it when I said it," was the engineer's admission; "I was only trying to get a rise out of you. But really, colonel, on second thought, I don't know but it is worth considering. As I say, Smith seems to know the

money game from start to finish. What is better still, he is a fighter from the word go—what you might call a joyous fighter. Suppose you drive out tomorrow or next day and pry into him a little."

The rancher-president had relapsed once more into the slough of discouragement.

"You are merely grabbing for hand-holds, Bartley—as I was a minute ago. We are in a bad row of stumps when we can sit here and talk seriously about roping down a young hobo and putting him into the financial harness. Let's go around to Frascanti's and eat before you go back to camp. It's bread-time, anyway."

The chief of construction said no more about his joking suggestion at the moment, but when they were walking around the square to the Brewster Delmonico's he went back to the dropped subject in all seriousness, saying: "Just the same, I wish you could know Smith and size him up as I have. I can't help believing, some way, that he's all to the good."

CHAPTER V.

The Specialist.

Though the matter of calling in an expert doctor of finance to diagnose the alarming symptoms in Timanyoni ditch had been left indeterminate in the talk between Colonel Baldwin and himself, Williams did not let it go entirely by default. On the day following the Brewster office conference the engineer sent for Smith, who was checking the output of the crushers at the quarry, and a little later the "betterment" man presented himself at the door of the converted-iron shack which served as a field office for the chief.

Williams looked the cost-cutter over as he stood in the doorway. Smith was thriving and expanding handsomely in the new environment. He had let his beard grow and it was now long enough to be trimmed to a point. The travel-broken clothes had been exchanged for working khaki, with lace-boots and leggings, and the campaign hat of the engineers. Though he had been less than a month on the job, he was already beginning to tan and toughen under the healthy outdoor work—to roughen, as well, his late fellow members of the Lawrenceville Cotillon club might have

said, since he had fought three pitched battles with as many of the camp bullies, and had in each of them proved himself a man of his hands who could not only take punishment, but could hammer an opponent swiftly and neatly into any desired state of subjection.

"Come in here and sit down; I want to talk to you," was the way Williams began it; and after Smith had found a chair the chief went on: "Say, Smith, you're too good a man for anything I've got for you here. Haven't you realized that?"

Smith pulled a memorandum book from his hip pocket and ran his eye over the private record he had been keeping.

"I've shown you how to effect a few little savings which total up something like 15 per cent of your cost of production and operation," he said. "Don't you think I'm earning my wages?"

"That's all right; I've been keeping tab, too, and I know what you're doing. But you are not beginning to earn what you ought to, either for yourself or the company," put in the chief shrewdly. And then: "Loosen up, Smith, and tell me something about yourself. Who are you, and where do you come from, and what sort of a job have you been holding down?"

Smith's reply was as surprising as it was seemingly irrelevant.

"If you're not too busy, Mr. Williams, I guess you'd better make out my time-check," he said quietly.

Williams took a reflective half-minute for consideration, turning the sudden request over deliberately in his mind, as his habit was.

"I suppose by that you mean that you'll quit before you will consent to open up on your record?" he assumed.

"You've guessed it," said the man who had sealed the book of his past.

Again Williams took a little time. It was discouraging to have his own and the colonel's preferings as to Smith's probable state and standing so promptly verified.

"I suppose you know the plain inference you're leaving, when you say a thing like that?"

Smith made the sign of assent. "It leaves you entirely at liberty to finish out the story to suit yourself," he admitted, adding: "The back numbers—my back numbers—are my own, Mr. Williams. I've kept a file of them, as everybody does, but I don't have to produce it on request."

"Of course, there's nothing compulsory about your producing it. But unless you are what they call in this country a 'crooked' crook, you are standing in your own light. You have such a staving good head for figures and finances that it seems a pity for you to be wasting it here on an undergraduate's job in cost-cutting. Any young fellow just out of a technical school could do what you're doing in the way of paring down expenses."

The cost-cutter's smile was mildly incredulous.

"Nobody seemed to be doing it before I came," he offered.

"No," Williams allowed, "that's the fact. To tell the plain truth, we've had bigger things to wrestle with; and we have them yet, for that matter—enough of them to go all around the job twice and tie in a bowknot."

"Finances?" queried Smith, feeling some of the back-number instincts stirring within him.

The chief engineer nodded; then he looked up with a twinkle in his closely set gray eyes. "If you'll tell me why you tried to kill Burdell the other day, maybe I'll open up the record—our record—for you."

This time the cost-cutter's smile was good-naturedly derisive, and it ignored the reference to Burdell.

"You don't have to open up your record for me; it's the talk of the camp. You people are undercapitalized—to hell it down into one word. Isn't that about the way it sizes up?"

"That is the way it has turned out; though we had capital enough to begin with. We've been bled to death by damage suits."

Smith shook his head. "Why haven't you hired a first-class attorney, Mr. Williams?"

"We've had the best we could find, but the other fellows have beaten us to it, every time. But the legal end of it hasn't been the whole thing or the biggest part of it. What we are needing most is a man who knows a little something about corporation fights and high finance." And at this the engineer forgot the Smith disabilities, real or inferential, and went on to explain in detail the peculiar helplessness of the Timanyoni company as the antagonist of the as yet unnamed land and irrigation trust.

Some real opportunities come to "John Smith," but the fear of detection and capture worries him deeply. Some big developments are given in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Servants as Hosts.

A curious custom exists in the town of Port of Spain, in the island of Trinidad. Every year the servants, who are all black, give a grand ball for their masters and mistresses. The Princes building, a huge place where all public entertainments are held, is engaged, and everything is done in the best style. There are two halls for dancing, one for the servants and the other for their guests, both of which are beautifully decorated.

The best band in the island is engaged, and the guests are given a champagne supper. Etiquette is very strict and precedence rigidly observed by the servants, the governor's butler and his lady going in before the chief justice's groom, and so on.

BUSINESS TO BOOM

No Reason for Nervousness Over Effect of War.

Era of Great Prosperity Ahead of Country — Financial Excesses Checked by Administration's Wise Handling of Situation.

Some nervous people seem to fear the effect war will have on business in this country. There is no occasion for that. Rather, there is warrant for anxiety lest we have too much business. An era of prosperity is ahead which might lead to financial excesses, but there is no ground for the fear that we may face depression.

Congress has voted a war credit of \$7,000,000,000. Some of that is to be turned over to our allies, but all of it is to be spent in this country for food, clothing, munitions and other supplies. All that money will be poured back into the channels of trade within a year.

There was in circulation on November 1, 1916, in the United States \$41.18 for each man, woman and child—a record probably never equaled anywhere in the history of the world. We are about to turn into our marts the almost incomprehensible sum of \$70 per capita for our 100,000,000 people, and still some fear there may be business stagnation.

The real problem is to prevent prosperity from getting beyond our control. The wise heads at Washington are not unmindful of the possibility of boom conditions that might lead us to extravagance. They are proposing to finance a large percentage of our war expenses by taxation, to make us pay as we go along. The tendency of that policy will be to prevent inflation and undue speculation.

A good part of the billions that are expended, as a result of war, will get back into the treasury in the shape of taxes on profits, and assessments levied in various ways. There is no question about our ability to pay. We shall do more business than ever before. Money will be more plentiful and easier to get than before. It will be the part of wisdom to curb with taxes the tendency toward wastefulness.

Secretary McAdoo's Good Work.

In the matter of apportioning the loans to our allies the secretary of the treasury may be relied upon to act with promptness, courage and foresight. He is performing a work of heroic proportions, more effective against Germany than any single army. The blows he administers are not spectacular, but they reach a vital spot and are of terrific violence. They are backed by the mighty power of the American people and a continent of resources. The nation is exerting its money power effectively because Mr. McAdoo thinks and acts on a national scale.

Financing the War.

Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo, after talking with 70 New York bankers, said: "No difficulty will be experienced in financing the government's requirements and without disturbing the business of the country in the slightest." This is a most encouraging view of the situation. New York bankers may be said to know more about the finances of this country than any other group of bankers, and when 70 of them assure the secretary of the treasury that the country is well able to finance the war, it is time for all to take heart.

Duty Calls All Americans.

The American people should wake to their great moment. This is the birthtime of vast changes in civilization. It is our privilege to play a foremost, indeed, a decisive part. Every American ought to realize this and eagerly take his place in the mighty task. Every American has such a place, from youth to old age. From the housewife in her kitchen to the president in the White House, all have their share to do, and we believe they will do it well.

American Spirit Will Win.

Our duty in the war is the subject of an editorial in almost every paper in the United States. Says the Chicago Tribune: "This democracy is not timid and is not afraid. It has the will, and the will shall prevail. The American spirit demands success. It demands a win. We do not care what the enterprise may be, it must be won. The United States does not want an alibi. It wants results, and it can get results. It has the will to win. Let Germany provide the alibi."

President's Course Justified.

President Wilson and his watchful waiting have been justified at every turn of the road. A wise president and a wise policy have saved dollars and men for the country—and may have saved the country, itself.

The Liberty Loan.

It has been thought wise to name the war loan and Secretary McAdoo has chosen the "Liberty Loan" as the title most appropriate. The name tells the story in words that every American understands. It is appropriate and significant. Every American who can should feel called upon to subscribe, and the money should be forthcoming without delay. The prosperity of the country is marked and the spirit of patriotism is running high, a combination that should insure a hearty and instant response to the appeal.

THE BRITISH CUT HINDENBURG LINE

German Defenses Wiped Out By Artillery Fire.

GERMAN'S FIRE FEEBLE

Prisoners Declare They're Sick Of War—Nearly Whole Line From Bullecourt To Arras. Is Taken.

British Headquarters in France.—So completely did the British artillery do its work before the attack between Croisilles and Bullecourt that 2,000 yards of the Hindenburg line are totally missing. This segment of the German defenses was completely wiped out.

Trenches Gone.

Airplane photographs taken May 1 show beautifully symmetrical zigzags, but the latest pictures taken contain no trace of the trenches. The support line also was badly "strafed," some 6,000 yards of it now being in British hands, leaving the Germans holding the remaining 2,000 yards. The Hindenburg front line between the south end of the captured trenches and Bullecourt is in dire danger, as it is flanked on both sides by the British.

German's Fire Feeble.

The engagement was really made up of two attacks—one in the early morning, when 70 prisoners were taken, and the second late in the afternoon—the two netting some 150 prisoners for the day's work in this sector. The German artillery's response was very feeble and the counter-barrage during the attack was particularly weak.

The prisoners taken came mostly from the Forty-ninth Reserve Division, which was recruited in the region of Posen and Breslau. It came to the west front from Roumania in February. Three officers are among the prisoners. The men showed by word and action that they were thoroughly tired of war. They had been in the line 21 days and constantly under the British shellfire. All of them said they had never seen anything like the artillery fire.

Little Left Of Portions.

Although they were concreted, all that remains of the captured portions of the Hindenburg line are cement and concrete machine gun emplacements. An underground corridor parallels the support trench 35 feet below the surface.

Several isolated posts are still standing between the scene of the latest smash and the Quant-Droocourt line. These include the villages of Reincourt and Hendecourt and other strong points, in which the Germans are capable of putting up strong resistance.

Gains Consolidated.

London.—The British troops are now holding the entire Hindenburg line from the east of Bullecourt to Arras, with the exception of trench elements on a front of about 2,000 yards west of Bullecourt, according to the official communication. The recent gains northwest of Bullecourt have been consolidated.

TO POOL ALL WAR BUYING.

U. S. and Allies Planning To Avoid Competition.

Washington.—A program under which the American Government virtually would pool its purchasing, for the sake of attaining maximum efficiency with that of all the allies, construct a buying machine into which hundreds of experts in many lines would fit as cog wheels and place one man in charge of the whole gigantic enterprise, is under consideration and fast assuming definite outline. This man would be the world's super-buyer. Into his hands the nations at bay with Germany would place approximately \$10,000,000,000 a year, a store of money exceeding the fabled fortunes of the ancient Incas and with no parallel in modern history.

BLIND SOLDIERS MOURN CHOATE.

Hold Memorial Service At Institution Founded Under Him.

Paris.—Soldiers blinded in the war held memorial services for the late Joseph H. Choate, of New York, at the Lighthouse for the Blind which was founded by New York men and women under the leadership of Mr. Choate. A resolution of sympathy was adopted and forwarded to Mrs. Choate.

HARVARD MAN GETS MENTION.

Carried Wounded From Firing Zone Under Violent Shelling.

Paris.—John Edward Bolt, of Harvard, whose residence is at Brookline, Mass., a member of the American Ambulance Field Service, was cited for distinguished services performed in September last. Bolt carried wounded men from the firing zone under violent shelling.