

# CALEB CONOVER RAILROADER



A STORY OF LOVE, POLITICS, INTRIGUE, OF A RICH & POWERFUL BOSS AND AN INTREPID YOUNG REFORMER.

BY ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE.

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Gulping, panting, all the spirit momentarily buffeted out of him, Gerald Conover lay staring stupidly up at the angry man.

"I'm—I'm married!" he bleated. "I—I mean to tell you when—"

"Who to?" demanded Caleb in an agony of self-control.

"Miss Enid Montmorency. She—"

"Who is she?"

"She is—she's my wife. Two months ago we—"

"Who is she? Is she in society?"

"Her family were very famous before the war. She—"

"Is she in good New York society?"

"She—she had to earn her own living and—"

"And what?"

"She—I met her at Rector's first. Her company—"

"You MARRIED a chorus girl?"

"She—her family before the war—"

Caleb had himself in hand.

"Get up!" he ordered. "You haven't money enough nor earning power enough to buy those boards you're sprawling on. Yet you saddle yourself with a wife—a wife you can't support. A woman who will down all your social hopes. And mine. You let a designing doll with a painted face dupe you into—"

"You shan't speak that way of Enid!" flared up the boy tearfully.

"She is as good and pure as—"

"As you are. And with a damned sight more sense. For she knows a legal way of grabbing onto a livelihood; and you don't. Shut up! If you try any novel-hero airs on me, you young skunk, I'll break you over my knee. Now you'll stand up and you'll listen to what I have to say."

Gerald, cowed, but snarling under his breath, obeyed.

"I won't waste breath telling you all I'd hoped for you," began Conover, "or how I tried to give you all I missed in my own boyhood. You haven't the brains to understand—or care. What I've got to say is all about money. And I never found you too stupid to listen to that. You've cut your throat. Nothing can mend that. We'll talk about the future at another time. It's the present we've got to tend to now. You're going to be of some use to me at last. The only use you ever will be to anyone. Your allowance, for a few months, is going on just the same as before. But you've got to earn it. And you're going to earn it by staying right here in Granite and working like a dog for me in this campaign. If you stir out of this town, or if you—that woman comes here, or if you don't use your pull in my behalf with the sapheads you travel with at the Pompton Club—if you don't do all this, I say, till further orders—then, for now and all time, you'll earn your own money. For you'll not get another nickel out of me. I guess you know me well enough to understand I'll go by what I say. Take your choice. You've got an earning ability of about \$4 a week. You've got an allowance of \$48,000 a year. Now, till after election, which'll it be?"

Father and son faced each other in silence for a full minute. Then the latter's eyes fell.

"I'll stay!" he muttered.

"I thought so. Now chase! I'm busy."

Gerald slouched to the door. On the threshold he turned and shook his fist in impotent fury at the broad back turned on him.

"I'll stay!" he repeated, his voice scolding an octave and breaking in a hysterical sob, "I'll stay! But, before God, I'll find a way to pay you off for this before the campaign is over."

Caleb did not turn at the threat nor at the loud-slaming door. He was scribbling a telegram to his New York lawyer.

"Gerald in scrape with chorus girl, Enid Montmorency," he wrote. "Find her and buy her off. Go as high as \$100,000."

"Father Healy says, 'The sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children.'—he quoted half aloud as he finished; "but when they are visited in the shape of blithering idiocy, it seems most like a breach of contract."

The Railroader was not fated to enjoy even the scant privilege of solitude. He had hardly seated himself at his desk when the sacred door was once more assailed by inquisitive knuckles.

"The Boys haven't wasted much time," he thought as he growled permission to enter.

The tall, exquisitely-groomed figure of his new son-in-law, the Prince d'Antri, blocked the threshold. With him was Blanche.

"Do we intrude?" asked d'Antri, blandly, as he ushered his wife through the doorway and placed a chair for her. Caleb watched him without reply. The multifarious branches of social usage always affected him with contemptuous hopelessness. He saw no sense in them; but neither, as he confessed disgustedly to himself, could he, even if he chose, possibly acquire them.

"We don't intrude, I hope," repeated the prince, closing the door behind him, and sitting down near the lit-

tered centre table.

"Keep on hoping!" vouchsafed Conover gruffly. "What am I to do for you?"

He could never grow accustomed to this foreign son-in-law whom he had known but two days. Obedient, for once, to his wife, and to his daughter's written instructions, he had yielded to the marriage, and consented to its performance at the American Embassy at Paris rather than at the white marble Pompton Avenue "Mausoleum," and had readily allowed himself to be convinced that the union meant a social stride for the entire family such as could never otherwise have been attained.

His wife and daughter had returned from Europe just before the reception, bringing with them the happy bridegroom. Caleb had never before seen a prince. In his youth, fairy tales had not been his portion; so he had not even the average child's conception of a medieval Being in gold-spangled doublet and hose, to guide him. Hence his ideas had been more than shadowy. What he had seen was a very tall, slender, very handsome personage, whose costumes and manner a keener judge of fashion would have decided were on a par with the princely command of English; perfect, but a trifle too carefully accentuated to appeal to Yankee tastes.

Beyond the most casual intercourse and table talk there had been hitherto no scope for closer acquaintance between the two men. The reception had taken up everyone's time and thoughts. Caleb had, however, studied the prince from afar, and had sought to apply to him some of the numberless classifications in which he was so unerringly wont to place his fellow-men. But none of the ready-made moulds seemed to fit the newcomer.

"What can I do for you?" repeated Conover, looking at his watch. "In a few minutes I'm expecting some—"

"We shall not detain you long. We have come to speak to you on a—"

rather delicate theme."

"Delicate?" muttered Caleb glancing up from the politely embarrassed prince to his daughter. "Well, speak it out, then. The best treatment for delicate things is a little healthy exposure. What is it?"

"I ventured to interrupt your labors," said d'Antri, his face reflecting a gentle look of pain at his host's brusqueness, "to speak to you in reference to your daughter's dot."

"Her which?" queried Caleb, looking at the bride as though in search of symptoms of some violent, unsuspected malady.

"Amadeo means my dowry," explained Blanche, with some impatience. "It is the custom, you know, on the Continent."

"Not on any part of the Continent I ever struck. And I've been pretty much all over it from Frisco to Quebec. It's a new one on me."

"In Europe," said Blanche, tapping her foot, and gazing apologetically at her handsome husband, "it is customary—as I thought everybody knew—for girls to bring their husbands a marriage portion. How much are you going to settle on me?"

"How much what? Money. You've always had your \$25,000 a year allowance, and I've never kicked when you overdid it. But now you're married, I suppose your husband—"

"But, Mr. Conover," broke in the prince, with more eagerness than Caleb had ever before seen on his placid exterior, "I think you fail to understand. I—we—"

"What are you driving at?" snapped Conover. "Do you mean you can't support your wife?"

"Papa!" cried Blanche, in distress, "for once in your life try not to be so forceful. It isn't a question of support. It is the custom—"

"For a father to pay a man to marry his girl? I can't see it myself, though now you speak about it, I seem to have read or heard something of the sort. Well, if it's the custom, I suppose it goes. How much?"

The prince shivered, very gently, very faintly.

"If it affects you that way," growled

Caleb, "I wouldn't 'a' brought up the subject if I was you. Say, Blanche, if you're too timid to make a suggestion, how'll this strike you? I'll double your present allowance—\$50,000 a year, eh?"

"Impossible!" gasped d'Antri.

"Not on your life!" retorted Caleb. "I could double that and never feel it. Don't you worry about me not being able—"

"But I cannot consent to—"

"Who's asked you to? It's to be her cash, ain't it? Not yours. I don't think you come in on this scene at all, Prince. It seems to be up to me and Blanche. And—"

"Oh, you'll never understand!" cried Blanche in despair. "For the daughter of a man of your means, and the social position I am to occupy as Princess d'Antri, my dot should be at least—"

"Hold on!" interposed Caleb. "I think I begin to see. I—"

"You don't see," contradicted his daughter, pettishly; "I'll have to explain. It—"

"No, you won't. If I couldn't understand things without waiting to have 'em explained, I'd still be braying at \$50 a month. As I take it, this prince party meets you in Yurruip, hears your father is the Caleb Conover—an old fool of an American with a pretty daughter to place on the nobility market—and you make your bid. You marry him and he's so sure of his ground he don't even hold out for an ante-wedding bonus. He chases over here with you, and when he don't find the dowry, or whatever else you call it, waiting for him at the dock, he makes bold to ring the cash register."

"The prince was on his feet."

"I cannot consent, sir, to listen to such—"

"Oh, yes, you can. I've heard of your sort. But I somehow thought they were all counts. I didn't know exactly how a prince stood; but I supposed the job carried an income with it. It seems you're just in the count class, after all. The kind of man that loaf about Yurruip living on the name of some ancestor who got his title by acting as hired man to his king or emperor or whoever ruled his two-for-a-quarter country. The sort of man that does nothing well enough to keep him in pocket money. Then some lookout makes the high sign, 'Heiress in sight!' and—"

Blanche burst into tears. Her husband threw his arm about her shoulders in assiduous, theatrical fashion, while Caleb sat gnawing his unlighted cigar and grimly eyeing the couple.

"There, there, carissima mia!" soothed d'Antri, "your father knows no better. In this barbarous country of his there are no leisure classes. I—"

"You bet there are!" snorted Caleb. "Only, here we call 'em tramps. And we give 'em thirty days instead of our daughters. Here, stop that damned snivelling, Blanche! You know how I hate it. I'm stung all right, and it's too late to squeal. The only time there's any use in crying over spilt milk is when there's a soft-hearted milkman cruising around within hearing distance. And from where I sit, I don't see any such rushing to my help. You'll get your 'dot' all right. Just as you knew you would before you put up that whimper. We'll fix up the details when I've got more time on my hands."

"Only, I want you and me and this prince-feller of yours to understand each other, clear. I'm letting myself be led for a certain sum, because I've crowded so load about your being a princess that I can't back down now without raising a laugh, and without spoiling all I've planned to get by this marriage. Besides, I'm going to run for governor, and I don't want any scandal or 'dramatic separation for lack of cash' coming from my own family. I'm caught fair, and I'll pay. But I want us three to understand that it's straight blackmail, and that I pay it just as I'd pay to have any other dirty story hushed up. That'll be all to-day. If you want some reading matter, Prince, here's a paper with a list of the liners that sail for Yurruip next week. Nothing personal intended, you know. Good-by."

"But, papa—" began Blanche, who, like d'Antri, had listened to this exordium with far less natural resentment than might have been looked for.

"That'll be all, I said," repeated Conover. "You win your point. Clear out! I'm busy."

The princess knew Caleb too well to press the victory further. She tearfully left the room, d'Antri following in her wake. At the door the latter paused, his long white fingers toying with his silky beard.

"Sir," he said, "you may be assured that I shall never forget your generosity, even though it is couched in such unusual language. You shall never regret it. I understand you have a wish to adorn the best society and—"

"No," grunted Conover, "not the Best, only the Highest. And it's no concern of yours, either way. Good-by!"

As the titled couple withdrew, Anice Lanier came in.

"Mr. Shevlin, Mr. Bourke and most of the others you sent for have come," she reported. "Shall I send them up?"

"Yes," said Conover dully, "send 'em along. It'll be good to talk to real human beings again. Say, Miss Lanier—as the girl started to obey his order—"did you ever write out that measly interview of mine for the Star, endorsing those new ideas of Roosevelt's on race-suicide, and saying something about a childless home being a curse to—"

"Yes, I was just going to mail it. Shall—"

"Well, don't! Tear it up. There's no sense in a man being funny at his own expense."

(To Be Continued.)



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PROPOSER AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION SUBMITTED TO THE CITIZENS OF THIS COMMONWEALTH FOR THEIR APPROVAL OR REJECTION, BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AND PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH, IN PURSUANCE OF ARTICLE XVIII OF THE CONSTITUTION.

Number One.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION Proposing an amendment to section twenty-six of article five of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Resolved (If the Senate concur), That the following amendment to section twenty-six of article five of the Constitution of Pennsylvania be, and the same is hereby proposed, in accordance with the eighteenth article thereof:—

That section 26 of Article V., which reads as follows: "Section 26. All laws relating to courts shall be general and of uniform operation, and the organization, jurisdiction, and powers of all courts of the same class or grade, so far as regulated by law, and the force and effect of the process and judgments of such courts, shall be uniform; and the General Assembly is hereby prohibited from creating other courts to exercise the powers vested in the Courts of Common Pleas and Orphans' Courts," be amended so that the same shall read as follows:—

Section 26. All laws relating to courts shall be general and of uniform operation, and the organization, jurisdiction, and powers of all courts of the same class or grade, so far as regulated by law, and the force and effect of the process and judgments of such courts, shall be uniform; but, notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution, the General Assembly shall have full power to establish new courts, from time to time, as the same may be needed in any city or county, and to prescribe the powers and jurisdiction thereof, and to increase the number of judges in any courts now existing or hereafter created, or to reorganize the same, or to vest in other courts the jurisdiction theretofore exercised by courts not of record, and to abolish the same wherever it may be deemed necessary for the orderly and efficient administration of justice.

A true copy of Resolution No. 1.

ROBERT McAFEE, Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Number Two.

RESOLUTION Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, so as to eliminate the requirement of payment of taxes as a qualification of the right to vote.

Resolved (If the House of Representatives concur), That the following amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania be, and the same is hereby proposed, in accordance with the eighteenth article thereof:—

That section one of article eight be amended, by striking out the fourth numbered paragraph thereof, so that the said section shall read as follows:—

Section 1. Every male citizen twenty-one years of age, possessing the following qualifications, shall be entitled to vote at all elections, subject however to such laws requiring and regulating the registration of electors as the General Assembly may enact:—

First. He shall have been a citizen of the United States at least one month.

Second. He shall have resided in the State one year (or, if, having previously been a qualified elector or native-born citizen of the State, he shall have removed therefrom and returned, then six months), immediately preceding the election.

Third. He shall have resided in the election district where he shall offer to vote at least two months immediately preceding the election.

A true copy of Resolution No. 2.

ROBERT McAFEE, Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Number Three.

A JOINT RESOLUTION Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, so as to consolidate the courts of common pleas of Allegheny County.

Section 1. Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, That the following amendment to the Constitution of Pennsylvania be, and the same is hereby proposed, in accordance with the eighteenth article thereof:—

That section six of article five be amended, by striking out the said section, and inserting in place thereof the following:—

Section 6. In the county of Philadelphia all the jurisdiction and powers now vested in the district courts and courts of common pleas, subject to such changes as may be made by this Constitution or by law, shall be in Philadelphia vested in five distinct and separate courts of equal and co-ordinate jurisdiction, composed of three judges each. The said courts in Philadelphia shall be designated respectively as the courts of common pleas number one, number two, number three, number four, and number five, and the number of said courts may be by law increased, from time to time, and shall be in like manner designated by successive numbers. The number of judges in any of said courts, or in any county where the establishment of an additional court may be authorized by law, may be increased, from time to time, and whenever such increase shall amount in the whole to three, such three judges shall compose a distinct and separate court as aforesaid, which shall be numbered as aforesaid. In Philadelphia there shall be instituted in the said courts of common pleas without designating the number of the said court, and the several courts shall distribute and apportion the business among them in such manner as shall be provided by law, and each court to which any suit shall be thus assigned, shall have exclusive jurisdiction thereof, subject to change of venue, as shall be provided by law.

In the county of Allegheny all the jurisdiction and powers now vested in the several courts of common pleas shall be vested in one court of common pleas, composed of all the judges in commission in said courts. Such jurisdiction and powers shall extend to all proceedings at law and in equity which shall have been instituted in the several numbered courts, and shall be subject to such changes as may be made by law, and subject to change of venue as provided by law. The president judge of said court shall be selected as provided by law. The number of judges in said court may be by law increased, from time to time. This amendment shall take effect on the first day of January succeeding its adoption.

A true copy of Resolution No. 3.

ROBERT McAFEE, Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Number Four.

A JOINT RESOLUTION Proposing an amendment to section eight, article nine, of the Constitution of Pennsylvania.

Section 1. Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, That the following is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in accordance with the provisions of the eighteenth article thereof:—

Amendment to Article Nine, Section Eight.

Section 2. Amend section eight, article nine, of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, which reads as follows:—

"Section 8. The debt of any county,

city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, except as herein provided, shall never exceed seven per centum upon the assessed value of the taxable property therein; but any city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, may be authorized by law to increase the same three per centum, in the aggregate, at any one time, upon such valuation," so as to read as follows:—

Section 8. The debt of any county, city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, except as herein provided, shall never exceed seven per centum upon the assessed value of the taxable property therein, nor shall any such municipality or district incur any new debt, or increase its indebtedness to an amount exceeding two per centum upon such assessed valuation of property, without the assent of the electors thereof at a public election in such manner as shall be provided by law; but any city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, may be authorized by law to increase its indebtedness to an amount exceeding two per centum upon such assessed valuation of property, without the assent of the electors thereof at a public election in such manner as shall be provided by law; but any city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, may be authorized by law to increase its indebtedness to an amount exceeding two per centum upon such assessed valuation of property, without the assent of the electors thereof at a public election in such manner as shall be provided by law; 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