

THE YOUNG MAN FROM WYOMING AT EAGLES MERE.

A SULLIVAN COUNTY NOVELETTE.

BY THOMAS J. INGHAM.

"It was then concluded that Obed and 'Cretia would go down with me, and take possession and go right on with the work. As it required several days for them to get ready, I had to stay. I was too uneasy in my mind for ordinary visiting, so I borrowed Obed's gun and went out on the back hills hunting. Deer were plenty, and I had the satisfaction of bringing one in on my back every night. I was strong enough to carry an ordinarily large deer several miles without much fatigue. Mr. Dalton said I was overstocking them with meat, but Mrs. Dalton said they could 'jerk it.' I cut it in neat slices, and whittled some sticks smooth, on which she strung it, after rolling it in hot salt, and then we hung it over a slow fire and smoked and dried it until it was 'jerked,' and would keep a long time.

"As soon as 'Cretia was ready, we loaded their baggage, consisting chiefly of clothing, into the canoe, and early on a fine morning pushed off. By running in the current and making free use of our paddles, we reached our landing above Forty Fort Eddy before dark. We carried the baggage to the house, and building up a cheerful fire in the fireplace, 'Cretia got a good supper. We ate with such appetites as a voyage on the river is sure to give, and gave due credit to 'Cretia for her good cooking.

"I was too restless to stay a single day in the valley, and made preparations for starting at once. It did not take me long to get ready. I took my father's old army knapsack and put in it the few articles I most needed, including 'rations' for several days. I took only my best suit of clothes, which I wore.

"Early in the morning I undertook to say good-bye at the door, but Obed said he would set me over the river, and 'Cretia, in tears, said she would go along. So out upon the river, and down to the mouth of Mill Creek we paddled the canoe, and landed—oh, how well we remembered it—at the very place mother had landed the morning after the massacre. There at last, in tears, I had to bid 'Cretia good-bye, and turn my face to the mountains.

"Although I was not yet twenty years of age, I had lived what seemed to me one life and was about to commence another. 'The dead past,' I said, 'shall be buried; the living future shall give me strength to triumph at the graves of my enemies.'

"My destination was New York. I had neither friends nor acquaintances in that city. I had no foolish expectations of picking up a fortune easily. All my hopes of success were founded on my consciousness of ability to labor and endure hardship. I made the journey on foot, traveling about forty miles a day, and lodging at farm houses, so my expenses were light until I reached the city.

CHAPTER TWENTY.

"I obtained lodgings the first night after my arrival in New York at a place consistent with my slender means, and the next morning I started out in search of employment. I had no way to get it except to ask for it. Commencing on the west side of Broadway near the Battery, I entered the first store, and asking for the owner, was soon in his presence. I told him, without delay or hesitation, that I was from the country and seeking employment. He replied courteously, but decidedly, that he had no occasion for my services.

"In a similar manner I entered every store on that side of Broadway. There were many variations in the way I was received and the conversations I had, but the final result was the same. I was not wanted. I then crossed to the east side and pursued my canvass back to the Battery.

"I soon entered what I believe was the largest retail establishment in the city, and having found the proprietor, made my business known. He looked at me very sharply and said:

"'What do you expect to do?'"
 "'Anything,' I answered, 'that needs to be done. What I don't know how to do I am willing to learn.'"
 "'Where are you from?'" he asked. I told him.
 "'Have you friends in the city?'"
 "'Not any.'"
 "'Have you letters of recommendation?'"
 "'I have not.'"
 "'Can you give me any references?'"
 "'I can in Wilkes-Barre.'"
 "'Name some.'"
 "'I mentioned the names of some business men there.'"
 "'What wages do you ask?'" he demanded.
 "'Enough to board and clothe me until I can earn more,' I answered.

"'Well,' said he decisively, 'I want a stout young man to handle boxes and do general work about the establishment. If you want to do that kind of work I will try you a month at fifteen dollars.'"
 "I knew fifteen dollars would only pay my board, but I replied:

"'That will be satisfactory. I can commence immediately.'"
 "'Don't you want the rest of the day to look about the city?'"

"'No, sir,' I answered; 'I shall see enough of the city before I leave it.'"
 "'You have come to stay, then?'" said he.

"'Yes,' I replied, 'I have come to stay.'"
 "Without any fussy show of zeal, and yet with watchful care, I did all that was within my power to do. Without being officious, I was always helpful, and did not wait to be told to do what I perceived ought to be done. I was there early and late.

"Mr. Golding spoke of me as the 'young man from Wyoming,' and employes of the establishment, who did not at

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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Little as he spared himself, Caleb spared his henchmen still less. With deadly literalness he saw to the carrying out of his earlier order that everyone, from Congressman to bootblack, must put his shoulder to the wheel. The ward heelers, the privileged lieutenants, the rural agents and the high officials in the Machine, alike, were driven as never before. No stone was left unturned, no chance ignored. Nor was this all. Forth went the call to all the hundreds, rich and poor, whom Conover at various times had privately aided.

The capitalist whose doubtful bill he had shoved through the Assembly; the coal-heaver whose wife's funeral expenses he had paid; the Italian peddler whose family he had saved from eviction; the countless poor whom his secretly-donated coal, clothes and food had tided over hard winters; the struggling farmer whose mortgage he had paid; the bartender he had saved from a murderer's fate; all these beneficiaries and more were commanded, in this hour of stress, to remember the Boss's generosity, and to pay the debt by working for his election.

Checks of vast proportions (drawn ostensibly for railroad expenses) were cashed by Shevlin, Bourke and the rest, and the proceeds hurled into every crevice or vulnerable spot in the voting phalanx. The pick of the Atlantic seaboard's orators were summoned at their own price, and commissioned to sway the people to the Machine cause.

On waged the fight. Disinterested outsiders beyond the scope of the Machine's attractions were daily drawn, by hundreds, into the Standish camp. In the country districts his strength grew steadily and rapidly. The people at large were aroused, not to the usual pitch of illogical hysteria incident on a movement of this sort, but to a calm, resolute jealousy of their own public rights. Which latter state every politician knows to be immeasurably the more dangerous of the two.

Conover's efforts, on the other hand, were already bearing fruit. His tireless energy, backed by his genius and the perfection of his system, were hourly enlarging his following. The "railroad wards" and slums of Granite and of other towns were with him to a man, prepared on Election Day to hurl mighty cohorts of the Unwashed to the polls in their idol's behalf. Loyalty, self-interest, party allegiance, and more material forms of pressures were binding throngs of others besides these underworld denizens to the Conover standard. Not even the shrewdest non-partisan dared forecast the result of the contest.

It was on the eve of election. The campaign work was done. One way or another, the story was now told. The last instructions for the next day's duties had been given. Conover, returning home from his headquarters, felt as though the weight of weeks had rolled off his shoulders. Now that he had done all mortal man could, he was not, like a weaker soul, troubled about the morrow. That could take care of itself. His worrying or not worrying could not affect the result. Hence, he did not worry.

As he turned into Pompton Avenue and started up the long slope crowned by the garish white marble Mausoleum, his step was as strong and untired as an athlete's. On his frame of steel and inscrutable face the untold strain of past weeks had left no visible mark. A few steps in advance of him, and going in the same direction, slouched a lank, enervated figure. The Railroader, by the gleam of a street lamp, recognized Gerald, and moved faster to catch up with him. At such rare intervals as he had time to think of domestic affairs, Caleb was more than a little concerned of late over the behavior of this only son of his. Since the visit of his

wife to Granite, Gerald's demeanor had undergone a change that had puzzled even his father's acute mind. He had waxed listless, taciturn and unnaturally docile. No command seemed too distasteful for him to execute uncomplainingly. No outbreak of rough sarcasm or wrath from Caleb could draw from him a retort, nor so much as a show of interest. Conover knew the lad had taken to drinking heavily and frequently, but also that Gerald's deepest potations apparently had no other outward effect than to increase his listless apathy.

Partly from malice, partly to arouse the youth, Conover had thrown upon him many details of campaign work. To the older man's wonderment Gerald had accomplished every task with a quiet, wholly uninterested competence that was so unlike his old self as to seem the labor of another man. More and more, since Anice's departure, Conover had come to lean on Gerald's help. And now it no longer astonished him to find such help capably given. Yet the father was not satisfied.

"It ain't natural," he said to himself, as he now overhauled his son. "Ain't like Jerry. Something's the matter with him. He's getting to be some use in the world. But he'll go crazy, too, if he keeps up those moony ways of his. He needs a shaking up."

He instituted the shaking-up process in literal form by a resounding slap between Gerald's narrow shoulders. But even this most maddening of all possible salutations evoked nothing but a listless "Hello, father," from its victim.

"Start Weaver off for Grafton?" queried Caleb, falling into step with his son.

"Yes."

"Make out any of that padrone list I told you to frame up for me?"

"I've just finished it. Here it is."

"Why, for a chap like you that list's a day's work by itself! Good boy!"

No reply. Caleb glanced obliquely at the taciturn lad. The sallow, lean face, with its dark-hollowed eyes, was expressionless, dull, apathetic.



"Say!" demanded Conover, "what's the matter with you anyhow?"

"Say!" demanded Conover, "what's the matter with you, anyhow?"

"Nothing."

"Ain't sick, or anything?"

"No."

"Still grousing over that girl?"

"My wife? Yes."

"Ain't got over it yet? I've told you you're well out of it. If she'd cared anything for you she'd never have settled with my New York lawyer for \$60,000 and withdrawn that fool alienation suit she was starting against me, or signed that general release. You're well out of it. I'll send

first learn my name, also called me the same; some called me 'Wyoming,' and then for short they called me 'Wy,' and to that name I answered for a long time.

"To bring my living within my means I rented a room in the top of a building, which I got very cheap. In it I put a single bedstead and mattress, with a couple of blankets. I bought provisions in the market, and at the end of the month I found I had not expended the whole of my wages. Mr. Golding said he would keep me another month at twenty dollars.

"The weather was now getting colder and I had to add something for bedding and fire. There was a small fireplace, and by purchasing a few cooking utensils I was able to board myself at a moderate expense.

"After the second month Mr. Golding hired me a year for three hundred dollars, and called upon me in hurried parts of the day to act as an assistant to the salesmen. This part of my duties I found constantly increased, until finally Mr. Golding gave me a department to attend to, and employed a laborer to do the heavy work I had been doing. When I became a salesman I had more time mornings and evenings than I had before, and as I attended no places of amusement I amused myself with long walks. I often traversed every street. I considered it desirable for me to become familiar with the city, and therefore I charged my memory with the names of all the business houses, and the localities of the residences of many of the principal citizens. This was not a difficult task in a city of twenty-five thousand inhabitants.

(To be continued.)

you up to South Dakota after the campaign's all over and let you get a divorce on the quiet. No one around here'll ever know you was married, and in the long run the experience won't hurt you. You've acted pretty decent lately, Jerry, and I'm not half sorry I changed my mind on that 'heavy-father' stunt and didn't kick you out. After all, one marriage more or less is more of an accident than a falling, so long as folks don't let it get to be a habit. You acted like an idiot. But by-gones are by-gones, so cut out the sulks. Cheap chorus girls weren't made for grown men to marry."

"I'll thank you to say nothing against her," intervened Gerald stiffly, with the first faint show of interest his father had observed in him for weeks.

"Just as you like," assented Caleb, in high, good humor, glad to have broken even so slightly into the other's armor of apathy. "In her case, maybe, least said is the better. So you're still homesick for her—and for New York, eh?"

"Yes."

"Still feel your own city ain't good enough for you?"

"What place is for a man who has lived in New York?"

"Rot! 'What place is?' About ten thousand places! And some seventy million Americans living in those places are as good and as happy and stand pretty near as good a chance of the pearly gates as if they had the heaven-sent blessing of living between the North and East rivers."

"Yes?"

There was no interest and only absent-minded query in Gerald's monosyllable. Listlessness had again settled over him. Word and mental attitude jarred on the Railroader.

"New York!" reiterated Conover. "I've took some slight pains to learn a few things about that place these last couple of months. Before that I took your word for it that it was a hectic, electric-lit whirlpool where nothing ever was quiet or sane, and where a young cub who could get arrested for smashing up a hotel lobby was looked up to as a pillar of gilded society. Since then I've bothered to find out on my own account. New York's a city with about two millions of people living on Manhattan Island alone. We out-of-town jays are told these two millions are a gay, abandoned, fashionable lot that spend their days in the congenial stunt of piling up fortunes and their nights in every sort of high jinks that can cost money and keep 'em up till dawn. 'All-night fun, all-day fortune-grabbing. Great place! Come see it! Well, I have seen it. Along around five or six p. m. about ninety-eight per cent. of those two million people stop work. They've been fortune-grabbing all right, since early morning. Only, they've been grabbing it usually for some one else. They pile onto the subway or the elevated or the big bridge and—where do they go? To a merry old all-night revel on the Great White Way? To an orgy of 'On-with-the-dance, let-joy-be-unrefined,' hey? Not them. It's home they go, quiet and without exhibiting to the neighbors any season passes for all-night dissipation. They are as respectable, decent, orderly, early-to-bed a crowd as if they lived on a farm. 'Tain't their fault if 'home's' usually built on the folding-bed plan and more condensed than a can of patent milk. Apart from that, they live just as everybody else in this country lives—no better, no worse, no gayer, no quieter. There's not a penny's difference between that decent ninety-eight per cent. and the business and working folks right here in Granite."

Gerald did not answer. He had not heard.

"That's the 'typical New Yorker,'" went on Caleb. "The 'typical New Yorker'—ninety-eight per cent. of him—is the typical every-day man or woman of any city. He does his work, supports his family, and goes to bed before eleven. Those are the folks I guess you didn't see much of when you was there. Nor of the real society push or even the climbers. The society headlines are too few anyhow to count in the general percentage. Besides, they're out of town half the year. You was mostly engaged in playing 'Easy Mark' for the other two per cent. The crowd you went with is the sort that calls themselves 'typical New Yorkers,' and stays out all night 'cause they haven't the brains to find any other place to go. Just a dirty little fringe of humanity, hanging about all-night restaurants or drinking adulterated booze in some thirst emporium, or spending some one else's money in a green-table joint. They yawn and look sick of life, and they tell everyone who'll listen that they're 'typical New Yorkers.'"

A polite smile from the dry lips, which Gerald of late was forever moistening, was the only reply to this harangue. Caleb gave up trying to draw the youth into an argument, and adopted a more business-like tone.

"I want you should run down to Ballston for me soon's you've voted to-morrow, Jerry. Better take the 7.15 train. I want you to go to the office of the Ballston Herald, and give a note from me to Bruce Lanier, one of the editors. He'll hand you a package. Nothing that amounts to much, but I've paid a big price for it, so I don't want it lost. Take good care of it, and bring it back on the two o'clock train. Get all the sleep you can to-night. You're liable to have a wakeful day."

"All right."

"The package Lanier's to give you is just a bunch of letters about a railroad deal. Nothing you'd understand. They're to be ready for me any time after to-morrow."

"I thought you wanted me to work at the polls for you."

"Anybody that knows how to lie can work at the polls. There's nobody but you I can send for those letters. All the other men I can trust can't be spared to-morrow. Be ready for the 7.15 to-morrow morning," he ordered as they mounted the broad marble steps of the Mausoleum. "Turn in early and get a good rest. Lord! I hope this drizzle will turn into rain before morning. Nothing like a rainy election day to drown reform. The honest heeler would turn out in a blizzard to earn his two dollars by voting, but a sprinkle will scare a Silk Socker from the polls easier'n a—"

CHAPTER XIX.

Unexpected News from Italy.

THE great door was swung open. Outlined against the lighted hall behind it was Mrs. Conover. She had seen their approach, and had hastened out into the veranda to meet them.

"Hello!" exclaimed the Railroader. "This is like old times! Must be twenty years since you came out to—"

"Oh, Caleb!" sobbed the little woman, and as the light for the first time fell athwart her face, they saw she was red-eyed and blotched of cheek from much weeping. "Oh, Caleb, how long you've been! I telephoned the Democratic Club an hour ago, and they said you'd just—"

"What's the row?" broke in her bewildered husband. "Afraid I'd been ate by your big nephew, or—"

"Don't, don't joke! Something dreadful's happened. I—"

"Then come into the library and tell us about it quiet," interrupted Caleb, "unless maybe you're aiming to call in the servants later for advice."

The footman behind Mrs. Conover, at the door, tried to look as though he had heard nothing, and bitterly regretted he had not been allowed to hear more. But Letty was silenced as she always was when the Railroader adopted his present tone. She obediently scuttled down the hall toward the library, an open letter fluttering in her hand. Caleb followed; and, at a word from his father, Gerald accompanied his parents.

As soon as the library door closed behind the trio, Mrs. Conover's grief again rose from subdued sniffing to unchecked tears.

"Oh, talk out, can't you!" growled Conover. "What's up? That letter there? Is—?"

"Yes," gurgled poor Letty, torn between the luxury of weeping and the fear of offending Caleb, "it's—it's from Blanche at Lake Como, and— and— Oh, she isn't married at all—and—!"

"WHAT!" roared Conover. Even Gerald dropped his cigarette.

"It's—it's true, Caleb!" wailed Letty. "She isn't. And—"

"What are you blithering about? Here!"

Conover snatched the letter and glanced over it. Then with a snort he thrust it back into his wife's hand.

"French!" he sniffed, in withering contempt. "Why in hell can't the girl write her own language, so folks can understand what she's—?"

"She's always written her letters to me in French ever since she was at school in Passy. They told her it—"

"Never mind what they told her. What's the letter say? Ain't married? Why—!"

"She was married. But she isn't. And—"

"You talk like a man in a cave. Is d'Antri dead, or—"

Her husband's frenzied impatience, as usual, served to drive the cowed little rabbit-like woman into worse agonies of incoherence. But by de-

grees, and through dint of much questioning, the whole sordid petty tragedy related in the Como postmarked letter was at length extracted from her.

Blanche, thanks to her heavy dowry and her prince's family connections, had cut more or less of a swath in certain strata of continental society during these early days of her stay in d'Antri's world. Her husband's ancestral rock with its tumble-down castle had been bought back, and the edifice itself put into course of repair. A bijou little house on the Parc Monceau and a palazzo at Florence had been added to the Conover fortune's purchases, and at each of these latter abodes a gaudy fete had been planned, to introduce the American princess and her dollars to the class of people who proposed henceforth to endure the one for the sake of the other.

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