Counting Room Carrings Owner Thrity Mechanic Body able to hold a brush Frant Geo e New Funntsune Frant George and Guinnwane Frant Finwane Frant vous Geo Gastiere Frant State & Gooder |

By Capt. OHARLES KING.

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CHAPTER L



The rain was plashing dismally on the Finy window sill and over the awning I the shops below. The street cars went fingling by with a dripping load of ontside passengers on both platforms. Wagone and drays, cabe and closed carriages, that rattled or rumbled along the ordinarily busy thoroughfare, looked as though they had been dipped in the river before being turned loose on the street, and their Johns, a bedraggled lot, must needs have something amphibious in their composition, else they could not have borne up against the deluge that had been sonking the city for two days past. The policeman, waddling aimlessly about at the opposite corner, enveloped in rubber cap and overcont, cast occasional wistful glances into the barroom across the way, wherein the gas was burning in deference to the general gloom that everhung the neighborhood, and such poalong under their umbrellas as though they half expected to have to swim before they could reach their destination. The dense cloud of sooty smoke that had everling the metropolis for weeks past, and that wind from any direction could never entirely dissipate, for the simple reason that smokestacks by the score shot up in the outskirts on every side, new seemed to be burled upon the roofs and walls, the windows and the pare-ment, in a black, pasty, carboniferous deposit, and every object out of doors that one could touch would leave its inky response upon the hand. A more depressing "spell of weather" had not been known for a year, and every living being in sight seemed saturated with the general gloom every living being ex-tept one. Capt. Fred lane, of the filesenth cavalry, was sitting at the dingy window of his office in the recrniting renderrous on Sycamore street and actually whistling softly to himself in en-

preme contentment. Two missives had reached him that phastly morning that had served to make him impervious to wind or weather. One-large, formal, impressive and bear Ing the stamp of the war department in heavy type across its upper corner-had borne to him the notification of his promotion to the rank of captain (Troop D) Eleventh cavalry, vice Curran, retired. The other a tiny billet-had given him even greater happiness. It might be hard to say how many times he had read and reread it since he found it on the snowy cloth of his particular breakfast table in his particular corner of the snng refectory of "The Queen City," on the books of which most respectable if somewhat venerable club his name had been borne among the list of army or navy members ever since his "graduation

leave," Afteen years before. All his boyhood, up to the time of his winning his endetship at West Point, hadbeen spent in the city where for the past stateen months he had considered himwill forfunate on being stationed on re-orniting service. During the second year of his term at the academy he was startled by the receipt of a sad letter from his mother, telling him briefly that his fa-ther, long one of the best known among the business men of the city, had best compelled to make an assignment. What was worse he had utterly broken down ender the strain, and would probably sever be himself again. Prond, sensitive and honorable, Mr. Lane had indeted on paying to the atmost farthing of his means. Even the old homestead went, and the broken hearted man retired with his faithful wife to a humble roof in the suburba. There, a few months after-word, he breathed his last, and there, during Fred's graduating year, the fol-lewed him. When the boy entered on his assuring the army he was armetically

stone in the world. Our office were not him a little sum that started him is the survive free from debt and that survei asserted our to attract future accumulations. This he had promptly banked until some good and safe investment should present itself, and, once with his regiment on the frontier, Mr. Lane had found his pay ample for all his needs.

ample for all his needs.

It is unnecessary to recommend history of his fifteen years' service as a subaltern. Suffice it to say that, steering clear of meet of the temptations to which young officers were subjected, he had won a reputation as a capital "duty officer," that was accented here and there or," that was accented here and there by some brilliant and dashing exploits in the numerous Indian campaigns through which the Eleventh had passed with no small credit. Lane was never one of the jovial souls of the regiment. His mood was rather tacture and contemplative. He read a good deal, and spent many days in the middle exploring the country in the neighborhood of his post and in hunting and fishing.

But, from the colonel down, there was not a man in the Eleventh who did not therefore the ladice, however, there was one or two who never lost an opportunity of giving the lientenant a feline and not ineffective clawing whenever his name

effective clawing whenever his name came up for discussion in the feminine conclaves occasionally held in the regiment. Sometimes, too, when opportun-ity served, he was made the victim of some sharp or sarcastic speech that was not always easy to bear in silence. Mrs. Judson, wife of the captain of B troop, was reputed to be "down on Lane," and the men had no difficulty whatever in locating the time when her change of heart

The truth of the matter was that, thanks to simple habits and to his sense of economy, Lane had quite a sung little balance in the bank, and the ladies of the regiment believed it to be bigger than it really was; and, having approved the furnishing and fitting up of his quarters, the next thing, of course, that they essayed to do was to provide him with a wife. Lucrothe trouble began. taneously with the arrival of his first har as a first lientenant there came from the distant east Mrs. Indson's younger states "Emmy" and Mrs. Loring's presty niece Pansy Fletcher. Lane was prompt to call on both, to take the young ladies driving of riding, to be attentive and conricons in every way: but, while he did thus "perceive a divided duty." what was Mrs. Loring's horror on discovering that pretty Pansy had fallen rap-turously in love with "Jerry" Lattimore, as handsome, reckless and impecuaious Foung dragoon as ever lived, and noticing but prompt measures prevented their marriage! Miss Fletcher was spidenly fe-transported to the east, whither Jerry was too hard up to follow; and then, in litterness of heart, Mrs. Loring blamed poor Fred for the whole transaction. Why had he held aloof and allowed th.

-that scamp-that ne'er do weel-to cut in and win that innocent child's heart, as he certainly did do?" Against Lattimore the vials of her wrath were emptied could not talk so openly.

Mrs. Indson had beheld the sudden departure of Miss Paney with an equanimity she could barely disguise. Indeed, there were not lacking good Christians in the garrison who pointed significantly to the fact that she had almost too hospitably opened her doors to Miss Fletcher and her lover during that brief but volcanie romance. Certain it is, however, that it was in her house and in a certain little nook off the sitting room that their long, delicious meetings occurred almost daily, the lady of the house being busy about the dining room, the kitchen, or the chambers overhead, and Emmy, who was a good girl, but densely uninterceting, strumming on the piane or yawaing over a book at the front window. "What Mr. Lano needs is a gentle.

modest, domestic little woman who will make his home a restful, peaceful ref-nge always," said Mrs. Judson: and, inferentially, Emmy was the gentle and modest creature who was destined so to bless him. The invitations to tea, the lares by which he was induced to become Emmy's escort to all the hops and dances, redoubled themselves after Miss Fletcher's departure; but it was all in vain. Without feeling any particular affinity for Mr. Lane, Fanmy stood ready to say "Yes" whensoever he should ask: but weeks went on, he never seemed to draw neares the subject, and just as Mrs. Judson had determined to resort to heroic measures and point out that his attentions to Emmy had excited the remark of the entire garrison, and that the poor child herself was looking was and strange, there was a stage robbery not twenty miles from the post. Lane, with fifteen troopers, was sent in pur-suit of the desperadoes, and captured them, after a sharp fight, ninety miles up the river and near the little infantry cantonment at the Indian reservation: and thither the lientenant was carried with a bullet through his thigh. By the time he was well enough to ride, the regiment was again in the field on Indian campaign, and for six months he never saw Fort Curtis again. When he did, Emmy had gone home, and Mrs. Judson's politeness was something awful.

Lane was out with the Eleventh again in three more sharp and severe campaigne, received an ugly bullet wound through the left shoulder in the memorable chase after Chief Joseph, was quartermaster of his regiment a year after that episode, then adjutant, and finally was given the recruiting detail as he neared the top of the liet of first lieu-tenante, and, for the first time in fifteen rears, found himself once more among the friends of his youth-and still a

Securing pleasant quarters in the ad-joining street, Mr. Lane specify made nimes if known at the club to which he had been paying his moderate annual dries without having seen anything of it but its bills for years past, yet never knowing inst when he might want to drop in. Then he proceeded, after office hours, to hunt up old chume, and in the course of the first week after his arrival he had found almost all of them. Bailey, who sat next to him in school, was now s prominent and prosperous lawyer, Terry, who set just behind him and oc-cationally inserted crooked pine in a con-venient crack in his chair, was thriving

the metropolis. He had always likely Wanting; they lived close together, and must be walk to and from school with each other simestovery day. Mr. Lambad started on his quest with a feeling skin to enthusiasm. Calm and reticent and retiring as he generally was, he felt a glow of delight at the prospect of once more meeting "the old crowd;" but thus evening he returned to his recens with a distinct sense of disconormment. Balley distinct sense of disappointment. Bailey had imped up and shaken hands with much effusion of manner, and had "my-don-follow" ed him for a minute or two, don-fellow ed him for a minute or wo, and then, "Now, where are you stopping? I'll be round to look you up the very first evening I can get away, and—of course we'll have you at the house;" but Lame clearly saw he was eager to get back to life deak, and so took his leave. Terry did not know him at all until he began that the began the began that the began that the began the bega to laugh, and then he blandly inquired what he'd been doing with himself all these years. But the man who rasped him from top to tee was Warden. Bustthey had shaken hands, Warden was standing with his back to the log fire, his thumbs in the arm holes of his waistcoat, tilting on his toes, his head well back, and most affably and distinctly petronizing him.

"Well, Fred, you're still in the army, are you?" he saked.

'Still in the army, Warden." "Well, what on earth do you find to do with yourself out there? How do you manage to kill time?"

"Time never hung heavily on my hands. It often happened that there wasn't half enough for all we had to do." "You don't tell me! Why, I supposed that about all you did was to drink and play poker."
"Not an unusual idea, I find, Warden,

but a very unjust one."
"Oh, yes, I know, of course, you have some Indian fighting to do once in a while; but that probably amounts to very little. I mean when you're in permanent camp or garrison. I should think a man of your temperament would just stagnate in such a life. I wonder you hadn't resigned years ago and come here and made a name for yourself."

"The life has been rather more brisk than you imagine," he answered, with a quiet smile, "and I have grown very fond of my profession. But you speak of making a name for myself. Now, in what would that have consisted?"

"Oh, well, of course, if you really like the army and living in a desert and that sort of thing, I've nothing to say," said Warden; "but it always struck me as such a—such a—well, Fred, such a wasted life, all very well for fellows who hadn't brains or energy enough to achieve success in the real battle of life" (and here Warden was "swelling visibly"), "but not at all the thing for a man of your ability. We all conceded at school that you were head and shoulders above the rest of us. We were talking of it some years ago here in this very room; there'd been something about you in the papers come general or other had mentioned you in a report. Let's see: didn't you get wounded, or something, chasing some Indians?" Lane replied that he believed that "something like that had happened," but begged his friend to go on; and Warden proceeded to further

expound his views: "Now, you might have resigned years ago, taken hold of your father's old business, and made a fortune. There's been a perfect boom in railroad iron and every other kind of iron since that panic of 78. Look at Terry; he is rolling in money—one of our most substantial men; and you know he was a mere drone at school. Why, Fred, if your father could have held on six months longer he'd have been the richest man in town today. It always seemed to me that he made such a mistake in not getting his friends to help him tide things over."

"You probably are not aware," was the reply, "that he went to friend after friend-so called-and that it was their failure or refusal to h; lp that broke him lown. The most active man in pushing him to the wall, I am told, was Terry's father, who had formerly been his chief

"Well," answered Warden, in some little confusion, for this and other matters in connection with the failure of Samuel Lane & Co., years before, were now suddenly recalled to mind, "that's probably true. Business is business, von mow, and those were tough times in the money market. Still, you could have come back here when you left West Point, and built up that concern again, and been a big man today—had your own establishment here, married some rich girl-you're not married, are you?" Lane shook his head.

"On the other hand, then, you've been fooling away all this time in the army, and what have you got to show for it?" "Nothing—to speak of," was the half whimsical, half serious answer.

"Well, there! Now don't you see? That's just what I'm driving at. You've thrown away your opportunities- 'All right, Strong: I'll be with you in a min-ute," he called to a man who was signaling to him from the stairway. "Come n and see us, Fred. Come and dine with us, any day. We're always ready for friends who drop in. I want you to meet Mrs. Warden and see my house. Now excuse me, will you? I have to take a hand at whist." And so away went Warden, leaving Lane to walk homeward and think over the experi-

ences of the day.

He had "made a name for himself" that was well known from the Yellowstone to the Colorado. Thrice had that name been sent to the president with the recommendation of his department commander for brevets for conspicuous and gallant conduct in action against hostile Indians. The Pacific coast had made him welcome. Busy San Francisco had found time to read The Alta's and The Chronitime to read The Alta's and The Chronicle's correspondence from the scene of hostilities, and cordially shook hands with the young officer who had been so prominent in more than one campaign. Santa Fe and San Antonio, Denver, Cheyenne and Miles City, were points where he could not go without meeting "troops of friends." It was only when he got back to his old home in the count that the lightness the found his members. that the lieutenant found his name asso-ciated only with his father's failure, and that his years of honorable service con-veyed no interest to the friends of his youth. "Money makes the mare go,"

Laur had been on daty agencia the city when a rumor began to circulate to the effect that investments of his in mining stocks had brought him large returns, and men at the club and ma dream a marked and wombous change. He no longer declined invitations to balls, parties or dinners when he knew that certain pursons were to be present. Makel Vincent had just returned from a year's tour abroad, and Lieut. Fred Lane had fallen in love at first sight.

It was a note from her that made even that dingy old office, on this most dis-mal of days, fairly glow and shine with aradiance of hope, with a halo of joy and gladness such as his lonely life had never known before. The very first time he ever saw himself addressed as Capt. Fred Lame, Eleventh cavalry, was in her dainty hand. He turned his chair to the window hand. the window to read once again the pre-cious words; but there entered, dripping, a Western Union messenger with a tele-

Tearing it open, Lane read these words: "All join in congratulations on your promotion and in wonderment at the colonel's selection of your successor. Noel is named."

Lane gave a long whistle of amazement. "Of all men in the regiment!" he exclaimed. "Who would have thought of Gordon Noel?"

CHAPTER II.



up, crowd! come up crerybody! It's champagne today."

The colonel of the Eleventh cavalry was a gentleman who had some peculiarities of temperament and disposition. This fact is not cited as a thing at all unusual, for the unbiased testimony of manders of every cavalry regiment in service would go far towards establishing the fact that all colonels of cavalry are similarly afflicted. One of the salient peculiarities of the commanding officer of the Eleventh was a conviction that nothing went smoothly in the regiment unless the captains were all on duty with their companies; for, while at any time Col. Riegs would approve an application for a lieutenant's leave of absence, it was worse than pulling teeth to get him to do likewise for a gentleman with the double bars on his shoulder. "Confound the man!" growled Capt. Greene, "here I've been seven years with my troop, saving up for a six months' leave, and the old rip disapproves it! What on earth can a fellow say?"

"You didn't go about it right, Greeney," was the calm rejoinder of a comrade who had been similarly "cut" the year previous. "You should have laid siege to him through madame a month or so. What she says as to who goes on leave and who doesn't is law at headquarters, and I know it. Now, you watch Noel. That fellow is wiser in his generation than all the rest of us put together. It isn't six months since he got back from his staff detail, and see how constant he is in his attentions to the old lady. Now, I'll bet you anything you like the next plum that tumbles into the regiment will go to his maw and nobody

"Riggs wouldn't have the face to give anything to Noel-in the way of detached duty, I mean. I heard him say when 'Gordy' was coming back to the regiment that he wished he had the power to transfer subs from troop to troop; he'd put Noel with the most exacting captain he knew and see if he couldn't get a little square service out of the fellow.

"That's all right, Greene. That's what he said six months ago, before Noel was really back, and before he had begun doing the devoted to her ladyship at headquarters. Riggs wouldn't say so now-much less do it. She wouldn't let him, comrade mine: and you know it." "Noel has been doing first rate since

he got back, Jim," said Capt. Greene, after a pause. -at drill or parade. It's field work and seconting that knocks him endwise: and plaser.

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if there was Indian within a hundred mile. Well, you know as much as

sent, and his companion, being wound up for the day, plunged ahead with his

"Now, I'm just putting this and that together, Greene, and I'll make you a bet. Riggs has managed things ever since he has been colonel so that a lieuservice and never a captain. It won't be long before Lane gets his promotion; and I'll bet you even before he gets it Riggs will have his letter skimming to Washington begging his two dict. tenant is ordered detached for recruiting Washington begging his immediate re-call and nominating a sub to take his place. I'll give you odds on that; and I'll bet you even that the sub he names will be Gordy Noel."

But, though he scouted the idea, Greene would not bet, for at that in-

stant the club room was invaded by a rush of young officers just returning from target practice, and the jolliest augh, the most all pervading voice, the cheeriest personality of the lot were these of the gentleman whose name Capt. Jim Rawlins had just spoken.

"What you going to have fellows?" he called. "Here, Billy, old man, put up that spelter; I steered the gang in here, and it's my treat. Don't go. Forbes: come back, old fellow, and join us. Captain, what shall it be? Say, you all know Dick Cassidy of the Sayanth. I hand make and a just been replenished with a good geometric and the sayanth. of the Seventh. I heard such a good rig on him this morning. I got a letter from Tommy Craig, who's on duty at the war department, and he told me that Dick was there trying to get one of these blasted college details. What d'ye suppose a cavalryman wants to leave his regiment for, to take a thing like that?"

"Perhaps his health is impaired. Noel." said Wharton, with a humorous twinkle in his handsome eyes. "Even cavalrymen have been known to have to quit their beloved profession on that account and get something soft in the east for a year or so."

The color mounted to Noel's cheeks but he gave no other sign of understanding the shaft as aimed at him. Promptly and loudly as ever he spoke out:

"Oh, of course, if he's used up in service and has to go in to recuperate, all well and good; but I always supposed Cassidy was a stalwart in point of health and constitution. Who's going to the doctor's to-night? you, Jack?"

Jack-otherwise Lieut. John Tracyshook his head as he whiffed at the cigarette he had just lighted and then stretched forth his hand for the foaming glass of beer which the attendant brought him, but vouchsafed no verbal reply. Lee and Martin edged over to where the two captains were playing their inevitable game of seven up. Two of the juniors-young second lieutenants -despite the extreme cordiality of Noel's invitation, begged to be excused, as they did not care to drink anything-even a lemonade; and no sooner had the party finished their modest potation than there was a general move. Wallace and Hearn went into the billiard room; Wharton and Lee started in the direction of their quarters; and presently Mr. Noel was the only man in the clubroom without an occupation of some kind or a comrade

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