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(Continied from last week)

Bishop rose from his chair and began to walk to and fro on the veranda. "It ain't possible," they heard him saying. "I won't git out as easy as that-

I jest cayn't!" "Perhaps it would be wrong to expect too much," said Alan, "but I was obliged to tell you what we are going in town for tomorrow."

Bishop wheeled and paused before them. "Ef Wilson puts up the money, I'd have enough to lift the mortgage an' a clean \$20,000 besides to put in some good investment."

Aunt Maria, the colored cook, came out and timidly announced that Alan's supper was on the table, but no one SMITH.-Barristers, heard her. She crossed the veranda We are loaning mo- and touched the young man on the

> "Supper's raidy, Marse Alan," she said, "en it's gittin' col' ergin." He rose and followed her into the dining room and sat down in his ac-

customed place at the long table.

When he had eaten, he went back to the group on the veranda. "I think I'll go up to bed," he told them. "My ride and running around at Darley have made me very tired. Father, get all your papers together and let's take an early start in the

morning."

CHAPTER XVI. S Henry, Aunt Maria's husband, who was the chief farmhand, was busy patching fences the next morning, Bishop sent over for Pole Baker to drive the spring wagon. Alan sat beside Pole, and Abner and Bishop and

Mrs. Bishop occupied the rear seats. Alan knew he could trust Pole, drunk or sober, and he confided his plans to the flattered fellow's ears. Pole seemed to weigh all the chances for and against success in his mind as he sat listening, a most grave and portentous expression on his massive face.

"My opinion is the feller 'll be thar as shore as preachin'," he said. "But whether you git his wad or not-that's another question. Miller's as sharp as a brier, an', as he says, if Wilson gits to talkin' about that land to any o' these hill Billies they'll bu'st the trade or die tryin'. Jest let 'em heer money's about to change hands, an' it 'll make 'em so durn jealous they'll swear a lie to keep it away from anybody they

know. That's human natur'." "I believe you are right," said Alan, pulling a long face, "and I'm afraid Wilson will want to make some inquiries before he closes."

"Like as not," opined the driver. "But what I'd do ef I was a-runnin' it would be to git some feller to strike up with 'im accidental-like an' liter'ly fill 'im to the neck with good things about the property without him ever dreamin' he was bein' worked."

The two exchanged glances. Alan had never looked at a man so admiringly. At that moment he seemed a giant of shrewdness as well as that of physical strength.

"I believe you are right, Pole," he said thoughtfully.

"That's what I am, an', what's more,

G. T. R. TIME TABLE

ARRIVALS. From Toronto, fgt _... 5.00 a.m.

From Haliburton _ 8.55 a.m.

21. From Port Hope ... 9.10 a.m. 22. From Toronto - - 10.50 a.m. 30. From Coboconk 10.10 a.m. 35. From Port Hope _ 2.00 p.m. 12. From I. B. & O. Jct _5.20 p.m. 23. From Port Hope __ 6.23 p.m. 54. From Whitby - 7.30 a.m. 24. From Toronto __ _ 8.05 p.m. 56. From Whitby _... _ 8.45 p.m. 94. From Midland __ ... 3.10 p.m. 15. From Belleville ___ 5.50 p.m. 13. From Belleville __ ..10.20 p.m. DEPARTURES. 12. For Belleville ... -_ 6.25 a.m. All the latest improved 51. For Whitby _____ 6.30 a.m. 22. For Port Hope_ 10.53 a.m. 43. For I.B.&O. Jct _ _ 11.00 a.m. 65. For Whitby ... - _ 11.05 a.m.

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For Coboconk ... __ 6.35 p.m.

23. For Toronto __ 6.23 p.m.

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this office. Office nearly op-LINDSAY, ONT.

I'm the one that could do the fillin' without him ever knowin' I had a funnel in his mouth. If I can't do it, I'll fill my hat with saft mud an' put it

Alan smiled warmly. "I'll mention it to Miller," he said. "Yes, you could do it, Pole, if any man on earth could." Driving up to Miller's office, they found the door open, and the owner came out with a warm smile of greeting and aided Mrs. Bishop to alight. "Well," he smiled when they had taken seats in the office. "We have gained the first step toward victory.

The elder Bishops drew a breath of relief. The old man grounded his heavy walking stick suddenly, as if it had slipped through his inert fingers.

on the register this morning."

Wilson is at the hotel. I saw his name

"I'm trustin' you boys to pull me through," he said, with a shaky laugh. "I hain't never treated Alan right, an' I'm heer to confess it. I 'lowed I was the only one in our layout with any business sense."

"So you are willing to accept the loan?" said Miller. "Willin'? I reckon I am. I never slept one wink last night fer feer

some'n' 'll interfere with it." Miller reflected a moment and then said: "I am afraid of only one thing, and that is this: Not one man in a million will make a trade of this size without corroborating the statements made by the people he is dealing with. Wilson is at breakfast by this time, and after he is through he may decide to nose around a little before coming to me. I'm afraid to go after him; he would think I was overanxious. The trouble is that he may run upon somebody from out in the mountains-there are a lot in town already-and get to talking. Just one word about your biting off more than you can chaw, Mr. Bishop, would make him balk like a mean mule. He thinks I'm favoring him now, but let him get the notion that you haven't been holding that land for at least a hundred thousand and the thing would bu'st like a bub-

Alan mentioned Pole Baker's proposition. Miller thought it over for a moment, his brow wrinkled, and then he said: "Good-a good idea, but you must call Pole in and let me give him a few pointers. By George, he could keep Wilson away from dangerous people anyway."

Alan went after Pole, and Miller took him into his consultation room in the rear, where they remained for about fifteen minutes. When they came out. Pole's face was very grave. "I won't ferget a thing," he said to Miller. "I understand exactly what you want. When I g't through with 'im, he'll want that land bad enough to pay anything fer it, an' he won't dream I'm in

"Do you remember my description of him?" asked Miller.

"You bet I do-thick set, about fifty, bald, red faced, sharp black eyes, iron gray hair, an' mighty nigh always with a cigar in his mouth."

"That's right," laughed Miller. "Now do your work, and we won't forget you. By all means keep him away

from meddlesome people." When Pole had left the office and Miller had resumed his revolving chair, Mrs. Bishop addressed him, looking

straight into his eyes. "I don't see," she said in a timid, hesitating way and yet with a note of firmness dominating her tone-"I don't see why we have to go through all this trickery to make the trade. Ef the land is good security fer the money, we needn't be afeerd of what the man will find out. Ef it ain't good security, I don't want his money, as fer as I'm concerned."

"I was jest thinkin' that, too," chimed in her husband, throwing a troubled glance all round. "I want money to help me out o' my scrape, but I don't want to trick no man, Yankee or what not, into totin' my loads. As Betsy says, it seems to me if the land's wuth the money we needn't make such a great to-do. I'm afeerd I won't feel

exactly right about it." The young men exchanged alarmed

"You don't understand," said Miller lamely, but he seemed to be unprepared for views so heretical to financial dealings, and could not finish what he had started to say.

"Why," said Alan testily, "the land is worth all Wilson can make out of it with the aid of his capital and the railroad he proposes to lay here. Father, you have spent several years looking up the best timbered properties and getting good titles to it, and to a big lumber company a body of timber like Reduction In Prices you hold is no small thing. We don't want to cheat him, but we do want to

> "Well." sighed Mrs. Bishop, "I'm timber you have out there." shore I never had no idea we'd resort to gittin' Pole Baker to tote anybody around like a hog after a yeer o' corn. | the fire end smoking very near his left I 'lowed we was goin' to make a open eye, and looked thoughtful. "To tell in his pockets, and shut trade that we could be proud you the truth, my friend," he said, "I of an' stop folks' mouths about Al- railly believe you'd be wastin' time to with easy adroitness. "I mentioned fred's foolish dealin's. But"-she look- on over thar."

ed at Abner, who stood in the doorway leading to the consultation room-"I'll do whatever Brother Ab thinks is right. I never knowed 'im to take undue advantage of anybody." They all looked at Abner, who was

smiling broadly.

"Well, I say git his money," he replied, with a short, impulsive laugh-"git his money, and then, ef you find he's starvin', hand 'im back what you feel you don't need. I look on a thing like this sorter like I did on scramblin' fer the upper holt in wartimes. I remember I shot straight at a feller that was climbin' up the enemy's breastworks on his all fours. I said to myse'f, 'Ef this ball strikes you right, old chap, 'fore you drap over the bank, yo're one less agin the Confederacy; ef it don't, you kin pop away at me.' I don't think I give 'im anything but a flesh wound in the back, beca'se he jest sagged down a little an' crawled on, an' that's about the wust you could do fer Wilson. I believe he ort to hold the bag awhile. Alf's hung on to it till his fingers ache an' he's weak at the knees. I never did feel like thar was any harm in passin' a counterfeit bill that some other chap passed on me. Ef the government, with all its high paid help, cayn't keep crooked shinplasters from slidin' under our noses, it ortn't to kick agin our lookin' out fer ourse'ves."

"You needn't lose any sleep about the Southern Land and Timber company, Mrs. Bishop," said Miller. "They will take care of themselves. In fact, we'll have to keep our eyes peeled to watch them even if we get this loan. Wilson didn't come up here for his health."

"Oh, mother's all right," said Alan, "and so is father, but they must not chip in with that sort of talk before Wilson."

"Oh, no, you mustn't," said Miller. "In fact, I think you'd better let me and Alan do the talking. You see, if you sit perfectly quiet he'll think you are reluctant about giving such big security for such a small amount of money, and he will trade faster."

"Oh, I'm perfectly willin' to keep quiet," agreed the old man, who now

seemed better satisfied. Pole Baker left the office with long, swinging strides. There was an entrance to the Johnston House through a long corridor opening on the street, and into this Pole slouched. The hotel office was empty save for the clerk, who stood behind the counter looking over the letters in the pigeonholed key rack on the wall. There was a big gong overhead which was rung by pulling a cord. It was used for announcing meals and calling the porter. A

big china bowl on the counter was filled with wooden toothpicks, and there was a showcase containing cigars. Pole glanced about cautiously without being noticed by the clerk and then withdrew into the corridor, where he stood for severa! minutes listening. Presently the dining room door opened, and Wilson strolled out and walked up to the counter.

"What sort of cigars have you got?" he said to the clerk.

"Nothing better than 10-three for a quarter," was the respectful reply as the clerk recognized the man who had asked for the best room in the house. Wilson thrust his fingers into his vest

pocket and drew out a cigar. "I guess I can næke what I have last me," he said, transferring his glance to Pole Baker, who had shambled across the cahoot with you nuther. I can man- room and leaned heavily over the open age that. I ain't no fool ef I do have register. "Want to buy any chickinsfine fryin' size?" he asked the clerk.

"Well, we are in the market," was the answer. "Where are they?" "I didn't fetch 'em in today," said Pole dryly. "I never do till I know what they are a-bringin'. You'd better make a bid on a dozen of 'em anyway. They are the finest ever raised on Upper Holly creek, jest this side o'

whar old man Bishop's lumber paradise begins." Pole was looking out of the corner of his eye at the stranger and saw his hand, which was in the act of striking a match, suddenly stay itself.

"We don't bid on produce till we see it," said the clerk. "Well, I reckon no harm was done by my axin'," said Pole, who felt the eyes

of the stranger on him. "Do you live near here?" asked Wilson, with a smile half of apology at

addressing a stranger, even of Pole's humble stamp. "No." Pole laughed and waved his hand toward the mountains in the west, which were plainly discernible in the clear morning light. "No, I'm a mountain shanghai. I reckon it's fif-

teen mile on a bee line to my shack." "Did you say you lived near old Mr. Rishop's place?" asked Wilson, moving toward the open door which led to the

"I don't know which place o' his'n you mean," said Pole when they were alone outside and Wilson had lighted his cigar. "That old scamp owns the whole o' creation out our way. Well, I'll take that back, fer he don't own any land that hain't loaded down with trees, but he's got territory enough. Some thinks he's goin' to seceed from the United States an' elect himself president of his own country."

Wilson laughed, and then he said: "Have you got a few minutes to spare?"

"I reckon I have," said Pole, "ef you've got the mate to that cigar." Wilson laughed again as he fished the desired article from his pocket and keep him from trying to cheat us by gave it and a match to Pole. Then he getting the upper hand. Rayburn leaned against the heavy railing of the thinks if he finds out we are hard up | banisters. "I may as well tell you," he'll try to squeeze us to the lowest he said. "I'm a dealer in lumber myself, and I'd like to know what kind of

Pole pulled at the cigar, thrust it well into the corner of his mouth, with

"Oh, you think so!" It was a vocal

start on the part of Wilson. "Yes, sir; the truth is old man Bishop has simply raked into his dern clutch ever acre o' fine timber out that away. Now, ef you went east, over t'other side o' the mountains, you mought pick out some good timber; but, as I said, old man Bishop's got it all in a bag out our way. Sawmill?"

"No, I don't run a sawmill," sald Wilson, with an avaricious sparkle in his eye. "I sometimes buy timbered lands for a speculation; that's all."

Pole laughed. "I didn't see how you could be a sawmill man an' smoke cigars like this an' wear them clothes. I never knowed a sawmill man to make any money."

"I suppose this Mr. Bishop is buying to sell again," said Wilson tentatively. "People generally have some such idea when they put money into such prop-

Pole looked wise and thoughtful. "I don't know whether he is or not," he said, "but my opinion is that be'll hold on to it till he's in the ground. He evidently thinks a good time's a-comin'! Thar was a feller out thar t'other day with money to throw at cats. He's been tryin' to honeyfuggle the old man into a trade, but I don't think he made a deal with 'im."

"Where was the man from?" Wilson

spoke uneasily. "I don't railly know, but he ain't a-goin' to give up. He told Neil Filmore at his store that he was goin' home to see his company an' write the old man a proposition that ud fetch 'im ef thar was any trade in 'im."

Wilson pulled out his watch. "Do you happen to know where Mr. Rayburn Miller's law office is?" he

"Yes: it's right round the corner. I know whar all the white men in this town do business, an' he's as white as they make 'em an' as straight as a

"He's an acquaintance of mine," said Wilson. "I thought I'd run in and see him before I leave." "It's right round the corner an' down

the fust side street toward the courthouse. I 'ain't got nothin' to do; I'll p'int it out." "Thank you," said Wilson, and they went out of the house and down the street together. Pole puffing vigorously

at his cigar in the brisk breeze. "Thar you are," said Pole, pointing to Miller's sign. "Good day, sir; much obleeged fer this smoke," and with his head in the air Pole walked past the office without looking in.

"Good morning," exclaimed Miller as Wilson entered. "You are not an early riser like we are here in the country." He introduced Wilson all round and then gave him a chair near his desk and facing him rather than the others. "This is the gentleman who owns the

property, I believe," said Wilson suavely as he indicated Bishop. Miller nodded, and a look of cunning

dawned in his clear eye. "Yes. I have just been explaining to Mr. and Mrs. Bishop that the mere signing of a paper such as will be necessary to secure the loan will not bind them at all in the handling of their property. You know how cautious older people are nowadays in regard to legal matters. Now, Alan here, their son, understands the matter thorough



"Thar you are," said Pole. ly, and his mind is not at all disturbed." Wilson fell into the preliminary trap. "Oh, no; it's not a binding thing at all," he said. "The payment of the

of course," Wilson recovered himself, "if we make the loan." Several hearts in the room sank, but Miller's face did not alter in the slightest. "Oh, of course, if the loan is

money back to us releases you-that is,

made," he said. Wilson put his silk hat on the top of Miller's desk and flicked the ashes from his cigar into a cuspidor. Then he looked at Mrs. Bishop suddenly-"Does the lady object to smoking?" "Not at all," said the old lady; "not

at all." There was a pause as Wilson re lighted his cigar and pulled at it in silence. A step sounded on the sidewalk and Trabue put his head in at the door. Miller could have sworn at him. but he smiled. "Good morning, squire,"

"I see you are busy," said the intruder hastily. "Just a little, squire. I'll see you in

a few minutes." "Oh, aft right" The old lawyer moved on down the sidewalk, his hands

Miller brought up the subject again

your proposition to my clients-the

proposition that they allow you the refusal of the land at one hundred thousand, and they have finally come round to it. As I told them, they could not possibly market a thing like that as easily and for as good a price as a company regularly in the business. I may have been wrong in giving such advice, but it was the way I felt about it." Without realizing it, Wilson tripped in another hole dug by Miller's inven-"They couldn't do half as well with it," the Boston man said. "In fact, no

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one could, as I told you, pay as much for the property as we can, considering the railroad we have to move somewhere and our gigantic facilities fer handling lumber in America and abroad. Still I think, and our directors think, a hundred thousand is a big Miller laughed as if amused. "That's five dollars an acre, you know, but I'm not here to boom Mr. Bishop's

timber land. In fact, all this has grown out of my going down to Atlanta to borrow twenty-five thousand dollars on the property. I think I would have saved time if I hadn't run on you down there, Mr. Wilson." Wilson frowned and looked at his

"We are willing," said he, "to make the loan at 5 per cent per annum on two conditions." "Well, out with them," laughed Mil-

ler. "What are they?" "First," said Wilson slowly and methodically, "we want the refusal of the property at one hundred thousand dollars."

Miller's indifference was surprising. "For what length of time do you want the refusal of the property at that figure?" he asked, almost in a tone of

Wilson hung fire, his brow wrinkled

(Continued on l'age 4)

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