THE "OLD SOMERSET" DEAL

At the back of Pitt Street, in Sydney, New South Wales, there once stood a large block of business offices, which for these purposes we will call Grenville House, though that is not the correct name. A few years back they were demolished in the course of some public improvements.

One doorway in Grenville House was completely surrounded by brass plates containing such legends as "The Blue Point Diamond Co., Ltd." ; "The Never Never Concessions, Ltd." ; "The Tintaroo Exploration Co., Ltd." Altogether there must have been nearly twenty of these brass plates, and in a corner of each were the words, "Sydney Agent—Mr. B. Wenter."

To put it plainly, Mr. B. Wenter was the spider and these brass plates were portions of his web. This gentleman managed to make an excellent income by fraud and trickery, and yet always to evade the clutches of the law. His favorite occupation was to get hold of miners just down for a spree from "up country," with their pockets full of gold, and show them how to enjoy themselves. Much of their wealth was transferred to the pockets of their astute guide, and amongst those miners who knew him he possessed a gaudy name.

In those days the gold fever was at its height, and raw hands flocked into the Colony thinking that all they had to do was to buy a shovel and scoop up gold into heaps. These gentlemen were the joy of Mr. Wenter's heart; they were so trusting and so eager to make money that on Mr. Wenter's advice they spent it like water—water that flowed like a waterfall into Mr. Wenter's banking account.

Now it chanced one morning that an elderly man, who looked very ill at ease in a frock-coat suit, and who had plainly stamped on him that he was from up country — it chanced that this gentleman paused outside Grenville House, and began to study the names of the various business men who rented offices therein.

He meandered slowly along until he came to Mr. Wenter's door. He read through all the names on the brass plates with a certain amount of trouble, and appeared to be profoundly impressed. From a corner of his office, like the spider in a corner of his web, Mr. Wenter lurked, and surveyed his prospective victim with approval.

For some moments the new-comer hesitated, and then pushed open the office door. By now Mr. Wenter was at his table, scribbling away for dear life.

"Good morning, sir," said the client.

Mr. Wenter continued to write—evidently he was so engrossed that he did not hear the salutation.

"Good morning, sir," repeated the stranger, this time in a louder key. "I hope I am not troubling you." He made as though to withdraw, which brought Mr. Wenter very quickly to his feet.

"Good morning, good morning!" he cried. "Have you been waiting? I am exceedingly sorry, but I have got a big Government contract in hand, and it has kept me very busy."

"I've got a little property for sale," said Mr. Wenter's client. "It's a mine up beyond Limbula Creek. I've stuck at it for many years and saved a few thousand, and now I want to go to the old country to spend them. There's plenty of gold up at Old Somerset —that's the name of the mine, but it wants new machinery and capital. and I don't feel equal to the strain either on myself or my pocket. My name is Gregory — John Gregory. Here's the title-deeds and a map of the country." He pushed over a roll of papers to Wenter.

"H'm!" remarked Mr. Wenter. "I dare say I can find you a customer if the mine is worth anything —I must see it first, of course. My terms would be 2½ per cent. commission on the sale, and expenses. Have you any figure in mind?"

"I reckon the mine is worth twenty thousand," replied Mr. Gregory. "When it is worked properly it will be worth five times that sum."

"Well, I'll see what I can do, Mr. Gregory. But, as I said, I must go and see the mine."

"I am at your service any time this week," replied th mine-owner.

"Shall we say the day after tomorrow, then?"

"That will suit me," said Mr. Gregory. "There's a train to Limbula at nine o'clock. We shall get to the mine then at about twelve Will that suit you?"

"Yes, I think I can manage it," replied Wenter, thoughtfully, though he knew he had no other engagement.

"Then I'll meet you under the station clock at ten minutes to nine," remarked Mr. Gregory, and took his leave.

"I wonder if there's anything to be made out of the deal?" muttered Wenter. "Anyway, I sha'n't lose anything by a trip to Limbula, even if I do nothing."

So at the appointed hour he met Mr. Gregory, and the two men travelled to Limbula. Here Mr. Gregory hired a rough cart and drove across to the Old Somerset Mine.

"Come along," he said, leading Wenter to the shaft.

'Lower away, Lily," he remarked to a black boy in charge of the windlass.

"Yes, boss," answered the boy, and presently the two men were down in the bowels of the mine.

Mr. Gregory led Wenter through various galleries, and the latter speedily saw that, as his client had said, the mine was full of valuable ore. He broke off lumps here and there, going well in, in order to see whether the ground had been salted. But it was very evident that the gold was in true vein and that there was nothing whatever suspicious about it.

"What does it pan out to the ton Mr. Gregory?" he asked.

"Roughly speaking, an ounce and a half to two ounces to the ton, so it is a good paying yield. Even now I've gone so far" — Mr. Gregory paused and looked round thoughtfully—"even now I am half inclined to buy the machinery and work the mine for another year.

"I wish I had your chance," said Wenter.

"You'd work it, would you?"

"Not me. If I had the money this will sell for I'd go straight across to the old country and enjoy myself for the rest of my days"

"Perhaps you're right," replied Gregory. I've roughed it pretty considerably all my life so far; it's about time I had a little comfort. Shall we go up now, or would you like to go round again?"

"No, thanks," Wenter replied; "I am quite satisfied. I'll do my best to make a deal for you."

"Right; I hope you will," Mr. Gregory remarked. Then he shouted up the shaft, "Hoist up, Lily!"

"You seem to have a good many hands on your mine," Mr. Wenter remarked, as they drove away.

"Oh, bless you, they're not all mine. There isn't enough work for me to keep many," Mr. Gregory answered.

When Wenter arrived at his office again he pondered considerably over the matter in question. Here was a mine teeming with gold, which only required capital to work it. Surely he could find someone to buy it at a good figure. There was every prospect of his making a heavy profit over the transaction.

"Let me see," he muttered, "Gregory wants twenty thousand for it. Supposing I get someone to offer twenty-five or thirty thousand for it, and then tell Gregory I can't find a customer, but that I'm willing to buy it myself and hold it until I can sell it again. I dare say he would take fifteen thousand if I offered to waive my commission and expenses. By gum!" he rubbed his hands and his flinty little eyes shone with glee. "By gum! that would be ten thousand pounds or more in my pocket for less than ten hours of my time."

He picked up the morning paper and saw that the next mail was due to arrive three days hence.

"Good!" he muttered. "I'll draw up a catchy advertisement."

He proceeded to write a paragraph pointing out the desirability of all people anxious to purchase mining properties coming to him. Then he strolled down to the newspaper office and made arrangements for it to appear for the rest of the week.

On Thursday the liner came in, and on Friday a gentleman called on Mr. Wenter. He was a tall, aristocratic-looking man, faultlessly dressed in the latest London fashion.

"Aw—I saw your — aw — advertisement," he said, speaking in that peculiar drawl which one associates with blue blood. "My name is Craven. I came over on the Denbigh Castle. I—aw—want to buy —aw—one of these mines." He handed Mr. Wenter a card.

"Yes, sir," said the agent. "I dare say I can fit you up. I've got a number of desirable mining properties on hand." As a matter of fact he had only got the Old Somerset Mine.

"You see—aw—I don't want to make a beastly splash. Funds are —aw—somewhat limited, doncher-know. Now just trot out some of these chaps. First of all, though, I don't—aw—want to be far away from Sydney. Not—aw—more than a hundred miles."

"Ah, that limits me," said Mr. Wenter, diplomatically. "Nearly all my properties are farther away than that. But I've got a first-class one up beyond Limbula; that's about seventy-five miles away."

"That's the ticket," remarked Mr. Craven. "Trot it out."

Then Mr. Wenter went into details. He enlarged enthusiastically on the Old Somerset Mine. His language was so eloquent that he completely carried away his listener.

"Aw—by Jove! that sounds deucedly ripping," cried Mr. Craven. "But you'll want—aw—more than I can go to for it, I expect."

"If you gave me some idea of what you could afford, I dare say I could meet you," said Mr. Wenter. "By the way, have you lunched? If not, will you lunch with me? These little matters are better arranged over a bottle of wine."

To be Continued.)

A CURE FOR RHEUMATISM

The Trouble Yields to the Rich, Red Blood Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Actually Make.

Ask any doctor and he will tell you that rheumatism is rooted in the blood; that nothing can cure it that does not reach the blood. It is sheer waste of money and time to try to cure rheumatism with liniments and lotions that only go skin deep. You can speedily cure rheumatism with Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, which enrich the blood, drive out the poisonous acid and loosen the stiffened, aching joints. Among the thousands of rheumatic sufferers cured by Dr. Williams, Pink Pills is Mr. W. A. Taylor, Newcastle, N. B., who says:—For a number of years I was a great sufferer from rheumatism which was seated in my shoulders and knee joints. I tried liniments and blistering, but with no effect. In fact the trouble was getting worse, and my knee joints grew so stiff that they would snap if I stooped, and I could scarcely straighten up. Altogether I was a terrible sufferer, and nothing I did or took gave me any relief until I began the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I took the Pills steadily for a couple of months and every vestige of the trouble disappeared. That was two years ago, and as I have had no return of the trouble I feel safe in assuming that the cure is permanent."

Nine-tenths of the common ailments that afflict humanity are due to bad blood, and as Dr. Williams' Pink Pills actually make new blood, that is the reason they cure so many different troubles, such as anaemia, indigestion, rheumatism, eczema, neuralgia, St. Vitus dance, paralysis and the ailments of girlhood and womanhood with all their distressing headaches, backaches and irregularities. Sold by all medicine dealers or by mail at 50c a box or six boxes for $2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

GAME FOR SPANISH KING.

Alfonso Will Follow English Methods of Game Preserving.

It would seem that the King of Spain was much impressed by what he saw in England last shooting season in regard to English methods of game preserving, and is desirous of turning his experience to good account in his own country. "His private estate, known as the Casa de Campo," says the Field, "consists of two large parks, one of between 5,000 and 6,000 acres, and another said to be seventy miles in circumference, fenced in with a high wall. Pheasants do well there, and red-legged partridges are numerous. With a view to increasing the number of pheasants and improving the shooting generally, his Majesty has commissioned an English sportsman, W. W. Watts, to organize matters for the coming game season and give the necessary instructions to the head keepers. Mr. Watts has already taken with him to Spain 2,000 pheasants' eggs and a good supply of hens' eggs and live fowls, so that, if all goes well, the shooting next season will be a revelation to Spanish sportsmen, especially if the keepers are instructed, as no doubt they will be, to get rid of some of the furred and feathered vermin, which are said to be numerous."

There are now 19,000 miles of railways in Mexico.

The Maoris of New Zealand now number 42,000 odd.

Honeycombs 18 feet high are built by the giant bees of India.

SOME ROYAL HOMICIDES

GRIM STORIES OF EUROPEAN COURTS.

Murders Committed by Princes of the Blood Royal and Nothing Said.

In the old days Royals thieved and swindled and murdered pretty much as they liked. They are not supposed to do such things now, perhaps because they are much more strictly looked after. But even in these modern times Princes of the Blood Royal have taken the lives of their fellow-men. It is always an accident, of course; at least, so the official journals say, if they say anything at all, says Pearson's Weekly.

Only the other day an aged Servian peasant received an official notice that his son, a private in the Servian Army, was dead, and that the body was being sent home for burial. Nothing was said as to the cause of death, and when the coffin arrived the old man insisted on having it opened. On the lid being removed, the soldier's family were amazed to find a bullet wound in the body. Suspicions of foul play were aroused. Inquiries were made and at last the truth was dragged from the reluctant officials.

An officer, they said, had been practising with his revolver, and, seeing the soldier with a cigarette in his mouth, he had betted that he could knock the tobacco ash from the tip of the cigarette. He raised his revolver, fired—and missed.

"Who was the officer—the man who murdered my son?" the old man asked.

They tried to put him off with all sorts of explanations, but at last he forced them to answer his question.

"It was His Highness the Crown Prince!"

Last July a hunting party, which included the Emperor of Austria, went to shoot at Mitten Weissenbach, near Ischl. In a surprisingly short time they returned to Ischl, one of the party having been injured.

REGAL COMPENSATION!

An "inspired" communication was later sent to the Press to the effect that Baron Krieghammer, Minister of War for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, had fallen while shooting and injured himself. The Baron, who was an old man of seventy-five, lingered for some time in great agony, but ten days after the accident he died.

The public accepted the official account of the affair and promptly forgot about it. Some weeks afterwards the facts began to filter through from Court circles, and without it actually becoming public property, the real story of that fatal expedition was whispered cautiously about in Vienna.

The true facts were simply that, about a quarter of an hour after the party had started, the Emperor's grandson, Prince George of Bavaria, fired the first shot, hitting Baron Krieghammer in the thigh. The Minister fell to the ground with a groan. Francis Joseph, who rushed to his assistance, found him lying in a pool of blood.

The unfortunate Minister was carried back to Ischl, where attempts were made to remove the bullet. The official version of the accident was only issued when it was seen that the Baron's case was hopeless, and that recovery was impossible.

If a motorist who runs down and kills anyone may be classed as a murderer, then at the present moment a murderer sits on a European throne.

While travelling in his motor-car at Pernersdorf, the King of Saxony ran over a farmer named Starcke. The man was killed almost instantly. King Frederick, who was one of the principals in the most unpleasant Royal scandal of recent years, was urged to grant some sort of compensation to the dead man's family. With truly regal magnificence, his Majesty generously offered them three hundred dollars!

WAS KING LUDWIG MAD?

The final tragedy of Ludwig II. of Bavaria has never been satisfactorily explained, and as both the chief actors are dead, it must ever remain a historical mystery.

Briefly, the affair happened in this way: Ludwig had been pronounced mad. He was deposed and taken by Dr. Von Gudden, a specialist in insanity, to the Castle of Berg on the Lake of Starnberg.

One evening the King and the doctor went out walking together —and they never came back. Some hours later their bodies were found floating in the lake. No one knows how they came there. "Inspired communications" said that Ludwig had thrown himself into the lake, and that Dr. Von Gudden had lost his life in trying to rescue him.

But how, then, can one explain the scratches on Von Gudden's face and the bruise, as though from the blow of a fist? The King must have hated him, for it was he who, with diabolical tactlessness, told him bluntly that he was mad.

Terrible things were whispered. The story most widely believed was that Ludwig had drowned his companion, and then, in a frenzy of madness, plunged into the lake

WHAT BIG LINERS EAT

BURN UP ONE HUNDRED TONS OF COAL PER DAY.

Stupendous Figures Concerning Coal, Steam, Water and Air Consumed.

Wonderment at the dimensions of the two great liners, Lusitania and Mauretania, has subsided. It is taken for granted that nothing is too great in size to float the Atlantic, and that the limitations of speed, of the liner of the future easily may be that of the limited railroad train.

But in spite of the period of interest in these two sister ships some of the most startling of facts concerning them were given the public. The stupendous figures accessible to concerning coal, steam and water consumed by one of these giants only recently are leaking Leviathans the wonderment of the world. For such giant vessels could be propelled through the water at 25 miles an hour and more day after day hinted at an enormous consumption of coal. Here are some of the concrete figures.

STORE 7,000 TONS FOR TRIP.

In the bunkers of one of these vessels 7,000 tons of coal are stored for the Atlantic trip. This means that 145 coal cars of 100,000 pounds capacity each would be required to load these bunkers to their capacity. This would require five monster locomotives and the crew of five trains to deliver this one loading of coal at the docks.

How much of this coal is burned on the average trip is known to only a few privileged persons. But it is known that in round figures each vessel consumes 1,000 tons, or 2,000,000 pounds, of coal each twenty-four hours. In each ship are twenty-five boilers, each with its yawning firebox underneath seething under forced draft. This means that into each of these furnaces 80,000 pounds of coal must be fed every twenty-four hours—the capacity, virtually, of the greatest coal car in railway service.

Each pound of coal should develop nine pounds of steam. This gives 1,800,000 pounds of steam which passes every twenty-four hours through the ship's turbines. This steam as generated and held for power stands at a pressure of 200 pounds to the square inch. At this pressure a pound of steam occupies about two cubic feet of boiler space, which indicates 1,680,000 cubic feet of steam through the engines every hour.

Six hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds of water a minute are necessary to slake the thirst of the great boilers. This is 450,000 tons of water in twenty-four hours, or 100,800,000 gallons a day. The average consumption of water in the cities is thirty-five gallons a day for each inhabitant, so that the needs of one of these passenger ships is equal to the needs of a city of almost 3,000,000 population.

In the furnaces twenty pounds of air are required to consume a pound of coal. Thus twenty tons of air must be driven through the grates of the furnaces every day. With the temperature at 100 degrees, this means that 26,100,000 cubic feet of air enters the furnaces every hour. A pipe ten feet square supplying this amount of air would develop gale conditions with wind blowing at fifty miles an hour.

BABY'S OWN TABLETS A BOON TO CHILDREN

A medicine that will keep babies and young children plump and good natured, with a clear eye and rosy skin is a blessing not only to the little ones but to mothers as well. Baby's Own Tablets is just such a medicine. They cure all the minor ailments of children and make them eat well, sleep well and play well. They are used exclusively in thousands of homes when a child medicine is needed. Mrs. G. Collins, Hirkella, Man., says: — "Baby's Own Tablets are the most satisfactory medicine I have ever used for ills of young children. They are as good as a doctor in the home." Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25c a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.