THE "OLD SOMERSET" DEAL

"Aw—I'm with you there," replied Mr. Craven. "I have not lunched yet."

The upshot of it was that the two men adjourned to an hotel near by, where Mr. Wenter engaged a private room. After the meal he plied his guest assiduously with wine, though he himself drank but sparingly. The result was that he obtained in writing a promise from Mr. Craven to buy the Old Somerset Mine for £26,000.

"Of course, Mr. Craven, business is business," said Mr. Wenter. "I ought to have some guarantee for this."

"I am not accustomed to have my word doubted," began Mr. Craven, with a drunken attempt at dignity.

Wenter instantly began to pacify the injured aristocrat, and eventually learned that £30,000 was lodged at the International Bank in the name of Vernon St. John Craven—a fact that he verified during the afternoon.

"Very well, Mr. Craven," Wenter said. "I will call at your hotel with the necessary documents as soon as I can get them in order."

Mr. Wenter's first duty on reaching his office was to turn up an English Peerage, by which he found that Vernon St. John Craven was the third son of a duke. He also saw Mr. Craven's name in the list of saloon passengers on the R. M. S. Denbigh Castle.

"That means eleven thousand for me," he muttered, rapturously. "Another deal like this and I can retire."

He called on Mr. Gregory that afternoon and told him that he could not find a purchaser for the Old Somerset Mine, but that he was willing to buy it himself.

"I cannot give more than fifteen thousand," he said.

"Then you can reckon the deal is off," remarked Mr. Gregory, calmly.

Then followed a period of haggling. Slowly Mr. Gregory's limit was lowered and Mr. Wenter's price was raised, until they cried quits at £18,000. An appointment was fixed for the following afternoon for the title-deeds to be transferred to Mr. Wenter's name, and then the wily scamp withdrew.

"Hang him," he muttered, vindictively. "That only means eight thousand now. Well, I'll make Craven weigh out for expenses, anyway."

On the following afternoon Mr. Wenter entered the office of Mr. John Rankin, a solicitor, and found Mr. Gregory waiting. With him was a gentleman whom he recognized as Judge Witmore, a magistrate, who lived some miles out of Sydney and who was much respected.

The transfer was made and the title-deeds handed over, Judge Witmore signing as witness. Then, as though he was tearing out his heart-strings, Mr. Wenter produced notes for £18,000 and handed them over to Mr. Gregory.

Following this transaction Mr. Wenter sought Mr. Craven, but was informed that the latter had gone away for the week-end and would not be back until Monday afternoon. So Mr. Wenter was forced to wait, but he wrote a note to his client stating that he had secured the mine for him, and that he would call and see him on the following Monday. He carried out this promise, but on arriving at the hotel was presented with a letter from Mr. Craven, in which the latter said he had forgotten Mr. Wenter's address, but would Mr. Wenter go on to Limbula, as he (Mr. Craven) had gone to see the mine.

Mentally confounding the energy of his client, Mr. Wenter set out for Limbula and arrived at the mine at about seven o'clock. Work had ceased for the day, but there were several miners standing around the Old Somerset shaft.

"Is there a Mr. Craven anywhere about, do you know?' he asked.

"Best ask Jack Gregory," said the man. He knows most everybody about."

"What can he be doing here?" Wenter thought as he hurried along he had no right still to be taking out gold. He rapped at the door and a voice bade him enter. A brawny man sat before a table piled up with nuggets.

"I'm looking for Mr. Jack Gregory," said Wenter.

"Then you needn't look no further, for you're looking at him."

"Eh?" gasped Wenter. "You are joking, I suppose. I want the Mr. Gregory who owned the Old Somerset Mine."

"Well, I'm Jack Gregory who owns the Old Somerset."

"You own it?" cried Wenter. "Why, it belongs to me."

The man gazed at him critically. "You look as though you're sober," he said, "but you talk as though you're silly drunk. I own the Old Somerset, and it'd take a blooming millionaire to buy it."

"But, man alive! I bought it last Friday," shouted Wenter. "See here; here's the title-deeds."

Jack Gregory examined them and laughed contemptuously.

"Forgeries," he remarked, calmly. "That's what they are. They're darned good ones, though. Here"—he went on unlocking a small safe—"here are the real title-deeds. No, you don't"—this, as Mr. Wenter made an excited grab at them.

Then Mr. Wenter began to alternately rave, implore, and threaten. In trembling tones he told the story of the purchase of the mine.

"Was it last Monday week you saw this chap?" Jack Gregory asked.

"Yes," cried Wenter.

Then Gregory gave an apt description of the "Mr. Gregory" who had called on Mr. Wenter. "Is that him?" he asked.

"Yes, to the life."

"Lor' bless you, that's my mine manager; at least, he was. Now I remember you. He brought you down one day last week; told me he wanted to show a friend over the mine. And you sold my mine to this Mr. Craven. Snakes! but it's the funniest thing I've ever struck. Say, was this Craven a tall chap with an aristocratic dial?"

"Yes, yes!"

"That's my manager's old chum. My word! they've done you proper. You paid up; has Craven paid?"

"Not a cent!" Mr. Wenter screamed.

Jack Gregory went into a paroxysm of laughter, which so maddened Mr. Wenter that he made a furious spring at the mine-owner, and was knocked down for his pains.

"None of your monkey tricks now," Gregory said.

"I'll have the law on you," yelled Wenter. "Where's your manager? What's his name?"

"He's left, and you can find out his name somewhere else. We called him Smith, but that's not his proper name," said Gregory. "Now hook it, while you're safe."

Mr. Wenter, tears of rage and fear pouring down his face, gathered up his useless papers and ran. He reached Limbula to find the train gone. He raved like a madman, and was within an ace of spending the night in jail. But at length he spent a sleepless night in the only hotel at Limbula, and travelled to Sydney by the first up train in the morning. On the way he got out at the station nearest Judge Witmore's house, and called on that gentleman. To his horror the judge disclaimed all knowledge of the transaction, and speedily proved to Mr. Wenter that he was not in Sydney on that particular day.

Off bolted Mr. Wenter into Sydney. The solicitor's office was not yet open, so he went on to the shipping company's office, where he inquired after Mr. Craven. Here he met with another rebuff, for he received a totally fresh address. He found a new Mr. Craven, utterly unlike his client. This gentleman admitted having made a confidant of a Mr. Brown on the way out whose description tallied with that of Mr. Wenter's client.

Off he rushed to the hotel where the fictitious Mr. Craven had put up, to find that his client had never returned, but had paid his bill from Melbourne.

Mr. Wenter was almost broken down by the time he reached the police-station. He told the whole story, and efforts were made to trace "Mr. Gregory" and "Mr. Craven" without success.

A few months later a letter reached Mr. Wenter from London. It ran as follows:—

Ten years ago two young men, whose names need not be mentioned, landed at Sydney with a considerable amount of money, almost all of which was fleeced from them by Mr. Wenter. So they resolved to get level some day. The chance came when a sudden strike of gold was made in the Old Somerset Mine.

One of these young men, who called himself Smith, was mine manager to Mr. Jack Gregory; the other, who had taken the name of Brown, had returned to England. Brown came out to Australia in order to work with Smith in getting even with Mr. Wenter. His part was to act as a green new-comer, but to learn something en route to satisfy Mr. Wenter's suspicions. Prior to his arrival, Smith went into Sydney with the Old Somerset title-deeds, which he showed Mr. Wenter. Afterwards he had them very carefully copied. Then Smith called on Mr. Wenter and agreed to buy the mine for twenty-six thousand pounds, though he hardly possessed twenty-six thousand pence. It was Smith, who is a talented amateur actor, who made up as Judge Witmore, and so gave a finishing touch to the deal.

The astute Mr. Wenter was kept waiting while Smith and Brown made tracks, but both Smith and Brown wish they had been present when the cute Mr. Wenter interviewed the real Mr. Gregory—it must have been very funny.

Cheer up, old friend; we have got more than even. We trust other poor wretches you have driven to desperation will also get even with you some day.

Yours gratefully,

SMITH AND BROWN.

P.S.—It may interest you to know that Brown was as sober as yourself at that lunch at the hotel.

Mr. Wenter's remarks, though picturesque and pointed, are hardly fit to print. Doubtless they can well be imagined.—London Tit-Bits.

ON THE ATLANTIC LINER.

She—"Did you observe the great appetite of that stout man at dinner?"

He—"Yes; he must be what they call a stowaway!"

TRY THIS.

It is not easy to start an argument by telling the average man that he is working too hard.

Sample Boxes Free!!

Every mother, every father, every head of every local home, is now given an opportunity to test the finest household balm the world knows! Chapped places, eczema, ulcers, scalp sores, scalds, cuts, bruises, burns, face blemishes, sores due to blood-poisoning—all are healed by Zam-Buk.

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THE GREAT SKIN-CURE.

SOME ROYAL PRIVILEGES

CURIOUS CLAIMS HIS MAJESTY CAN MAKE.

King Edward Has Many Perquisites Which He Could Claim But Does Not.

Having illegally changed her name, and assumed the British flag, to which she had no right, a large steamer was, in the Australian courts, recently pronounced forfeit to the King.

Of late years our British monarchs have been so modest in asserting their legal privileges and prerogatives that comparatilvely few people have the faintest idea how wide are these privileges, or how great are the powers of the Crown.

The best known and most valuable of Royal perquisites is the money of people who die intestate and without leaving known relatives. Their estates revert to the Crown. Each year a large sum is thus credited to the income of the Crown.

All wrecks of the sea belong to the King, if he choose to claim them. So do the Royal fish, whales and sturgeon, and the Royal bird, the swan.

Saltpetre is another Royal perquisite. The Sovereign has, by an old law, the power to enter any man's land to dig for saltpetre, or to send anyone to dig.

THIS ANCIENT PRIVILEGE

dates from the days when saltpetre was invaluable to national safety as an indespensable ingredient of gunpowder.

Strictly speaking, all gold and silver found in the United Kingdom is the absolute property of the Crown. Even as it is, a very stiff license must be paid to the Crown for the privilege of working precious metals to be found in these islands.

The King may also enter any man's land for the purpose of making fortifications. This Royal prerogative is by no means obsolete, for of late years land has been acquired for this purpose from unwilling owners along many parts of our Southern and Eastern coasts. Compensation is, however, given.

The copyrights of the authorized versions of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer are vested in the Crown, but authority to print them was granted by charter to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and by license to the King's printers.

KING MAY PARDON.

It lies with the King to pardon, if he so pleases, any convict in any prison in the country. There is only one exception to this rule. By an Act of George III. it is stated that the King cannot pardon persons convicted of certain forms of Sabbath breaking.

Not a penny piece in the way of taxation may be collected in Great Britain without the authority of Parliament, but no such restriction obtains in any colony acquired by conquest. There the authority of the Crown alone is legally sufficient to levey and collect taxes.

Nor could anyone legally object if the King were to set up a mint of his own, and coined money for his own use. Even if the metal were base, it is doubtful whether anything could be done without special legislation first. The King is the one person who could not be arraigned for this form of counterfeiting.

AS HEAD OF THE CHURCH,

it lies with the King to appoint any qualified person to a bishopric, and what is not so well known a fact is that the King is supreme patron of all livings, and could, if he pleased, at once fill any that happened to be vacant.

In the matter of conferring titles, the King's power is practically unlimited, and there seems no reasonable doubt that he could make everyone a peer if he so desired. Certainly, no subject to whom the Sovereign offered a title could refuse to accept it without breaking the law.

Many small perquisites come annually into the possession of the King. The Dukes of Marlborough and Wellington each present small replicas of the French flag and Royal Standard on the anniversaries respectively of Blenheim and Waterloo. The six Cashmere shawls of the kind which Queen Victoria treasured so highly are also sent annually, while heriots and quit rents to the Crown take many forms, among the more curious being milk-white greyhounds, horseshoes, and red roses.—London Answers.

Pessimism is the power of entertaining all the aches without eating any of the apples.

CONSUMPTION'S STARTING POINT

Lies in Weak, Watery Blood. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Make the Blood Rich and Red.

Bloodlessness is the starting point of consumption. When your blood is thin and watery your whole health declines. Your face grows pale, your appetite fails and your heart jumps and flutters at the least exertion or excitement. You are always weak and wretched and lose interest in everything. This is the point from which you may easily step into that hopeless decline that leads to consumption and the grave. What is actually needed to bring back health and strength and energy is the new rich blood Dr. Williams' Pink Pills actually make. In all the world there is no other tonic medicine like them, and all who feel weak and easily tired should take these Pills at once, and regain new health.

Miss Ada Burke, The Range, N. B., says:—"I feel that I cannot say too much in favor of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. In March, 1907, I was attacked with whooping cough which clung to me for several months, and when the cough disappeared I was left weak and run down. All summer I was ailing, but when the autumn came I seemed to be completely worn out. For a whole month I never moved outside the house, and could scarcely walk about the house I was so weak. I had no appetite, my color was a greenish yellow. I had severe headaches and would be almost breathless at the least exertion. I took several bottles of medicine, but it did not help me, and then my mother got me three boxes of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, when I had used them I was much better and by the time I had taken another three boxes I was again enjoying the best of health, with a hearty appetite, good color and renewed energy."

If you want new health and new strength try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, a fair use of this medicine will not disappoint you. Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for 2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

A PREFERRED CREDITOR.

We have just heard a good story about a merchant who recently failed. He called all his creditors together, and offered to settle with them at 10 per cent., giving them his notes payable in thirty days.

As most of the creditors had little hope of getting anything, they eagerly accepted the proposition. One man, however, stood out for better terms, and all efforts to get him to agree were futile. Finally, the bankrupt took him out into the hall and said:—

"When you come in and sign with the others, I will make you a preferred creditor."

"All right," said the objector. "Under those circumstances I will agree to a settlement."

The papers were signed, and all the creditors left, except the one who had been told he was to be preferred.

"What are you waiting for?" said the man who had failed.

"Why, you said I was to be preferred. I am waiting to know what I am to get."

"Well, I tell you—you will get nothing."

"Get nothing? Why, you promised to make me a preferred creditor, if I would sign with the rest."

"And so you are; I make you preferred. I tell you now you get nothing. The others wait thirty days before they know it, and then they get nothing."

AS THE HILL YOU CLIMB.

Take the trouble as it comes,
As the hill you climb;
When thunder beats his drums,
March in time.
Lookin' trouble in the face,
You're a winner in the race.

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