

The Free Press Short Story

RUMBLING GIANTS

JOHN SCOTT DOUGLAS

IG SVEN THORNTON trembled with anger as he leaned forward over the desk, his rugged face hard as brown rock.

"What?" exploded Sven. "You know what I'll go to the Gibraltar Construction Company and tell them your financial condition. You're about broke, aren't you?"

For a moment his blue eyes blazed and it seemed that Bailey was about to spring across the desk at the larger youth facing him. Instead, he gripped the rungs of his chair until his fingers were white; when he spoke, his voice was ragged with emotion.

"Never mind that!" snapped Sven hotly. "The fact remains that they wouldn't give you a contract to do the work if they thought you were on the ragged edge of nothing. You're going to hire me—and like it! And some day I'm going to break you, understand? Break you as you broke me."

Alfred Bailey was not one to be bullied, but it struck him that there was an essence of truth in the last statement. He had been foreman of a company owning a group of trucks in Seattle. Sven Thornton had worked under him. One day Sven's staggering gait had seemed to suggest just one thing—drunkenness.

Alfred had accused Sven of this, and the sullen Swede had refused to say a word in his own defense. Alfred had dismissed him, and the Swede had promised revenge. Not until he had saved up enough money to buy a string of trucks for himself had Alfred learned from a truck driver the true reason that Sven had staggered that last day of work. In reality he had been too sick to stand—he was coming down with typhoid which later kept him in bed with a raging fever for several months.

Alfred had tried in vain to locate Sven to right the wrong he had done the other; but Sven had left Seattle, and it was impossible to learn his whereabouts. At that time Alfred was making good money hauling for the Chinook mines on the western slope of the Cascade Mountains of Washington. The mines had now closed down, and the odd jobs he could secure from time to time were hardly sufficient justification for employing the number of truck drivers he already had.

Alfred hesitated, finally turning to the grim-faced youth facing him. "I'll hire you, Sven. But not for the reason you think. I'm hiring you because I did you an injustice in the past and I want to make up for it. I'm not hiring you because of any fear of your threats!"

The other's lips curled. "Put it any way you want to save your own feelings," said Sven sarcastically. "But you know that you fired me because you were afraid I'd get your job. You know now and you know then that I've never touched liquor in my life."

"I feel rotten about that," confessed Alfred. "If you'd only told me you were sick—if you wouldn't say a word!"

Sven's face grew hard. "I didn't say a word because I figured you were going to bounce me, anyway."

position as employer. No; he decided to wait. When the break came, he would fight in the open with whatever weapons he had at hand. He would beat Sven in fair fight, or, in fair fight he would lose.

Bailey's other big problem was securing the truck work on the Cascade dam. Samuel McDermott, a lean, wiry, blue-eyed Scotchman, was superintendent in charge of the Gibraltar Construction Company's operations. The Gibraltar had so far used only their own string of sixteen trucks. They needed more trucks, many more. McDermott, however, would only shake his sandy head when Alfred approached him, saying, "We're getting along very well, mon. Later, perhaps, but not now. I'll let you know."

He did not let Alfred know, however. Week after anxious week passed, and still McDermott would not give his decision. The dam had risen to half its height; there was the possibility the Gibraltar could complete the dam without hiring additional trucks. Alfred was desperate.

Rains set in, then, the heavy, persistent rains native to the Cascades. The mountain roads around Chinook became almost impassable with mud; yet Sven Thornton and several of the other drivers continued to haul where there was any work to be had.

The river on which the Gibraltar was working had been emptied by diverting the stream near its source into another river. The water now rose continually in the half-completed basin, straining against the wall of the dam, rising until nearly ten feet of water was caught in the bowl, then fifteen, and finally twenty.

Alfred braved the mountain roads to drive to the dam in his little car. He interviewed McDermott, but the Scotchman still insisted that his own trucks could do the work. He was not so confident of this, however, as he had been on any previous occasion.

Alfred drove back, dithered. His preoccupation and worry may have had something to do with his adding on a steep, downhill road. The car overturned and landed on its side, pinning Alfred beneath it.

Fortunately a motorist came by half an hour later and extricated him from the wreckage. His left arm was broken, he was badly bruised, but otherwise Alfred was unharmed. The motorist was going his way, and took him to a doctor in Chinook.

Returning to his office, Alfred disconcertedly observed that a train load of quick-drying cement had arrived at Chinook. "McDermott will have his own trucks haul that, too," he reflected morosely.

At six o'clock Alfred was preparing to leave when he received a call. He lifted the receiver, recognizing McDermott's voice. "Listen," said the Scotchman breathlessly. "It's happened! The river's broken through! There's a raging torrent coming down. I don't mind if the river sweeps over the completed part of the dam. But it's eating it out at the north side. I've had the truck drivers hauling stone down to fill the breach, but it's still widening. They refuse to make any more trips—say the bank is not safe. If you'll bring up your ten trucks loaded with sacks of that quick-drying cement to fill the breach, I'll give you a contract that'll knock your eyes out. But I'll have to warn you that the bank's like glass, and you'll be taking plenty of risk. Will you do it?"

For a moment Alfred could not trust himself to speak. "Do it? Of course I'll do it!" His voice was hoarse with excitement.

Alfred hung up the receiver with his uninjured right hand. His left arm hung in a sling. He sprang to the door and crossed to the adjacent building, where the truck drivers were sitting about a hot stove. Swiftly he imparted the information McDermott had given him.

Sven's stern mouth hardened into a grin while the other men concurred. Beaten! Sven had beaten him! Alfred saw slightly red as he started at Sven Thornton; then his brain cleared. "You will drive the trucks as far as the dam, won't you?" he demanded.

"Even that's risky on a night like this," said Sven, speaking for the other men. "But we'll do it, Mr. Bailey."

"What're you planning to do?" demanded Sven suspiciously, the confident light dying in his eyes.

Alfred eyed his coldly. "I'm only asking you to drive as far as the dam."

Are you afraid to do that?" Sven snorted. "Afraid? Course, I'm not!"

The ten trucks set out for the station. Laborers had already assembled at McDermott's order. Back after sack was hoisted onto the waiting trucks.

They started the slow, laborious climb along the mountain road. The ten rumbling giants crawled through the thick, sucking mud, their headlights barely penetrating the inky murk ahead. Sven's truck was in the lead.

On the front seat of the second truck sat Alfred beside Roan, his face white, cold, determined. His left arm in the sling was throbbing now; yet he scarcely noticed it.

At last they reached the dam. The lead truck stopped on the brink of a steep bank which seemed to drop straight off from the road. Alfred crawled out of the second truck, cold and wet. A zigzag road twisted down the bank to a slight rise above the breach in the north side of the dam. Here the water was pouring through the open hole, eating away the bank as well as the dam. A shiver coursed down his spine as he looked down that glassy road.

A man in a slicker came running up, his blue eyes grave. "Think you can make it, Bailey?"

Sven grunted. "No chance!"

Alfred's reply was calm and determined. "Make it? Of course we'll make it. I'm going to take those trucks down myself. I wouldn't ask any man of mine to try it."

Sven's heavy jaw sagged. "Bailey, you're crazy!"

Alfred smiled recklessly, and there was a triumphant gleam in his eyes when he looked at Sven Thornton. "You said you'd break me. All right, try it! The trucks are here; I'm going to take them down myself!"

McDermott stared at Alfred incredulously. "Mon, I admire your nerve, but I won't let you do it. A man with two strong arms would have plenty to do!"

Alfred smiled. "Watch me!"

He jumped into Sven's truck and started it. Backing all his slender strength against the wheel, he wrenched it around with his right hand, backed up, and started the heavily loaded truck rocking forward. Sven suddenly sprang in front of the truck. Alfred applied the brakes. "Get away, Sven—or I'll run you down!"

"You won't!" yelled Sven fiercely. "Get out of my truck!"

"Your truck?" Alfred laughed harshly. "Are you going to get out of my way?"

Sven sprang aside as Alfred started slowly forward. He reached for the wheel, jerking the truck back toward the main road. "Get out of my truck," he snarled. "I'm driving that truck!"

He pulled Alfred out as he would have handled a child. Alfred, helpless with one hand, could do nothing when Sven sprang to the wheel and started down the steep slope.

His heart was in his throat as Alfred saw the giant lumbering down the road, slipping, sliding one way, then the other, but plodding forward. At the bottom of the slope there was a short, flat expanse. Sven turned the truck around and backed determinedly toward that undermined bank. Alfred screamed a warning. No use. His words would not carry against the shrilling wind. He ran down the bank.

Sven had backed the truck to the very edge. Was he trying to wreck the truck deliberately? No, he had stopped now, and the ratcheting apparatus was working.

Alfred ran harder his arm ached with agony. Suddenly the cement spilled from the rear end of the truck into the big breach.

Alfred reached the truck as Sven was moving forward again. "Listen," he shouted; "I won't let you do that again, Sven. I didn't realize the risk."

"Listen, you fool!" said Sven, with a tight smile. "I know when I'm licked. I know when I've met a better man than I am. I'm going to bring all the cement down—and no one's going to stop me." Bring the cement down he did. The water tumbled less fiercely through the gap, the rain fell away to a light pattering. The swollen torrent went down too, as loud after load of cement was dropped into the breach, entirely closing it.

While Alfred Bailey was signing a contract in his office the next morning, Sven Thornton opened the door. He started to leave when he saw the Gibraltar's superintendent in the office, but Alfred motioned for him to come in.

"Now that the contract's all signed, Mr. McDermott, I'd like you to meet my new foreman. His wages were raised this morning."

Sven's jaw dropped. "Foreman? Raised wages? Why—why—"

"Not a word out of you!" said Alfred with pretended severity. "I'm raising your wages to-day—but one of these days I'm going to fire you."

CHEESE AS YOU LIKE IT

Few foods are so distinctive as cheese for few foods can be used in such a variety of ways in the luncheon, supper or dinner menu. There was a time when cheese was usually served as a final tidbit to a substantial meal, but to-day its high food value in addition to its savory flavor is rightfully taken into account and this healthful food is one of the ingredients used in making an unlimited number of nourishing main courses. The following recipes are a few examples of how cheese may be combined with cereals or bulky vegetables to make a satisfying dish. Although in some cases the amount of cheese called for in the recipe seems small in comparison to that of other ingredients, the cheese may contribute the most food value due to the fact that it is such a concentrated food.

CHEESE RING WITH VEGETABLES
1 cup milk
1 cup soft bread crumbs
1 egg
1 1/2 cups cooked macaroni
1 cup Canadian cheese, diced
1 tablespoon minced parsley
1 tablespoon chopped pimiento
1 teaspoon minced onion
3 tablespoons melted butter
Salt and pepper

Scald milk. Add to bread. Pour well beaten egg and other ingredients. Add into greased ring mold and oven-poach in a moderate oven (350 degrees F.) for about 50 minutes. Turn out on hot platter. Pour filling in centre and garnish with parsley.

FILLING
1 cup medium cream sauce
2 cups cooked vegetables, such as
1 cup cooked peas
1 cup cooked carrots
Salt and pepper

RAMKIN OF EGG AND SPINACH
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
1/2 cup grated cheese
1 1/2 cups cooked spinach, chopped
Salt and pepper

Melt butter, blend in flour and seasonings and gradually add milk. Stir until mixture thickens. Add grated cheese. Pour 1/2 cup spinach in each ramekin. Drop raw egg on top of spinach. Season with salt and pepper. Oven-poach at 350 degrees F. for 15 minutes, or until eggs are set. Cover with cheese sauce and serve.

BALZED TOMATO AND CHEESE
6 slices bread
1 cup cheese
2 cups tomato juice
3 eggs
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon minced onion

Butter bread and cut into cubes; cut cheese into cubes and put bread and cheese in baking dish in alternate layers. Beat eggs lightly, add tomato juice, salt, pepper and onion. Pour over bread and cheese and bake in moderate oven at 350 degrees F. for about 40 minutes.

CANADIAN GRADES BARLEY
Canadian barley is one of the best feeds for many classes of live stock, and for the purposes of commercial grading barley is divided into three classes, namely: six-row barley; two-row barley and Trell barley. The higher grades of the two-row barleys and six-row barleys are used by the malting trade, while Trell and the lower grades are used for feeding purposes.

The six-row grades, especially grade No. 3 Extra Canada Western six-row, are most in demand with the malting trade. The use to which the barley is put depends largely on the amount of nitrogen present, and there is a wide variation in the nitrogen content of Canadian six-row barley. Barley high in nitrogen or protein content is used by the distiller in the production of beverages such as high alcoholic content, in the production of commercial alcohols, or in the production of malt extracts. Barley of the lower nitrogen or protein content is used by the brewer in the production of beers or beverages with a lower alcoholic content, and in the production of vinegars.

From 70 to 80 per cent. of Canadian total barley production is devoted to live stock feeding. The crop this year, according to preliminary estimate, totals 64,550,000 bushels, an increase of 48 per cent. over 1934.

ATTRACTION OF EARTH
It has been calculated that were an object to be thrown from the earth with a velocity of five miles per second it would leave the earth entirely and become a satellite of the earth. If the velocity were increased beyond five miles per second the object would continue to revolve around the earth in an elliptical orbit whose width would increase with the velocity until a velocity of seven miles a second was reached, when the object would fly off on a parabolic curve, escaping the attraction of the earth and becoming a satellite of the sun.

TOAD IN A COAL SEAM
A toad was found buried in a coal seam at the Nethersea Colliery, Burton-on-Trent, two hundred yards below the surface and a mile from the pit shaft. When a miner's pick struck into a pocket of clay out raked the toad. Three inches in length, with skin like that of a young alligator, it had no mouth, but it was evident that it once possessed one, though the aperture was sealed up. It recovered its sight and the use of its sight and the use of its limbs, but did not live very long.

IS SCOTLAND GETTING AWAY FROM PORRIDGE?

The Scotch are great consumers of cheese, butter and eggs, if important figures of these commodities can be taken as a guide. In the matter of cheese New Zealand is the principal source of supply followed by the Netherlands, Australia, Canada and Denmark. Butter comes mainly from Denmark, followed by New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands, Irish Free State, Sweden and Latvia. Canada does not figure in this trade, according to the Agriculture Department of the Canadian National Railways. When it comes to eggs, the Irish Free State easily takes first place, followed by Denmark, Poland, The Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, China, Australia, Canada, Roumania, from which it might be informed that there is a very cosmopolitan flair to eggs consumed in Scotland.

HALF-MILLION INCREASE IN TOURISTS
Tourist traffic to Canada during August registered an increase of 631,688 compared with the corresponding month of last year. Visitors admitted during August numbered 2,885,480, of whom 2,048,500 came by highway and ferry, 151,293 came by boat, and 85,678 came by train. Tourists to Canada in August, 1934, numbered 2,253,792.

The ever-increasing tourist movement between the United States and Canada emphasizes the freedom of international travel between these two countries. The international boundary, often referred to as the most travelled over in the world, has a length of 6,500 miles, of which 3,100 miles are land boundary and 2,400 miles are water boundary. There is no other boundary of such length on which no gun or armament is to be found.

COME AGAIN

Departing Guest—You've got a pretty place here, Frank, but it looks a bit bare yet.
Host—Oh, it's because the trees are rather young. I hope they'll have grown to a good size before you'll come again."

Faith in the Lord Jesus is the only sure medicine for troubled hearts.—J. C. Ryle.

We deem those happy who, from the experience of life, have learned to bear its ills, without being overcome by them.—Juvenal.

Governor General Expert Guide



Lord and Lady Tweedsmuir spent much time on deck as the Canadian Pacific SS. Duchess of Richmond steamed up the St. Lawrence. In the above picture Canada's new Governor-General, who is a distinguished historian as well as a successful writer of romantic adventure stories, pointed out historic landmarks of Canada's Ancient Capital to Lady Tweedsmuir and his son, the Hon. Alastair Duchan, as the liner neared Quebec.

Money Talks

—but you must tell it what to say!

Let's suppose that the dollars you spend were suddenly given minds of their own—and the job of deciding what to buy for you.

They'd have to learn their way around in a hurry. And one of the first things they'd do would be to study the newspapers—every advertisement that discusses something you'd be needing, or wanting. They'd get the latest facts on an automatic refrigerator and sports shoes and tea and motor oil and all the rest. They'd make a business of knowing what where and when to buy.

Are you less careful and less constant in your ad-reading than you should be? Do you have to depend on other people for facts that are clearly stated in the advertising pages of this newspaper?

Read advertising thoroughly, consider all the points you find there on their merits. Find out in advance exactly what things will best serve your needs—and why. After all, that's the only way to get your money's worth, every time.

The real reason for advertising is not to help some one sell something, but to help you buy what you want.