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CHAPTER XX.

FOR the first time in his life Raymond was lonely, almost to the point of despair. To have both Ann and Louis taken out of his life on the same day left a painfully empty space. He did not permit himself to hope that Ann would return—he had, in fact, advised against it—and after his supper was over he sat beside the fire listening to the wind and pulling at his pipe like one deserted of his kind.

It had turned cold, and a great current of air was sweeping down from the peak, a movement portending some great change in the clouds. Kelly predicted snow, but as most of the outside work on the mine was done he was not concerned about the weather. He was, in fact, taking account of himself and trying to address himself to a future without "Hesper." The glow of his pride had died out. The confidence which sprang from his possession of gold had dulled into doubt.

As he sat thus, pondering over his problem, he heard voices, and a moment later a loud rap shook his door, ominous with a decisiveness of stroke.

"Come in!" he shouted somewhat surlily, for he did not enjoy interruption.

Munro, Brock, Carter and one or two others he didn't know entered, covered with snow.

"Good evening, gentlemen." He indicated chairs. "What can I do for you this evening?"

Carter seemed very nervous and took a seat without looking at his host. Munro was smiling, but his eyes were aslant as he replied:

"Oh, we just called to pass the time of night and inquire about your good health."

Raymond glanced from Munro's waggish lips to the frowning or troubled faces of the other men and braced himself for trouble.

"Out with it, Carter! What do you want of me?"

Carter fidgeted on his chair. "Well, you see, it's this way, Rob: We held a meeting today, and we decided that in view of the struggle that labor is making here all the mines should either shut down or put their men into the ranks."

"You have asked my men to join, haven't you?"

"Yes."

"What did they say?"

Munro chimed in, "They said, 'Go to blazes.'"

Raymond smiled. "How impolite of them! Well, now, let me say once again, Carter, I am in sympathy with your main objects. I think a man should be paid for every minute he works, but I don't believe in any method of forcing men who are working and want to work into a strike. I can't afford to go into any such organization."

"You can't afford not to," growled Brock.

His tone angered Raymond. "What have you to say in this matter?"

"I'm a member of the executive committee."

"Since when?"

"No matter when. What I say goes."

"Does it? Well, you keep a civil tongue in your jaws when speaking to me."

Brock rose. "You'll close down tomorrow or we'll close you down."

Raymond faced him. "We will not close down, and you can't close us down. Carter knows, and you know, Jack, I've played fair in this. I have not believed in your methods. I stood with Larned, your own organizer, against violence. If you can't convince my men by argument you needn't come to me to drag them into your ranks. What difference will my hands make anyway?"

Carter seized upon this. "It will make all the difference there is. There are a dozen of these small operators holding out because you and Kelly do."

Heart Strength

Heart Strength, or Heart Weakness, means Nerve Strength, or Nerve Weakness—nothing more. Possibly, not one weak heart in a hundred is, in itself, actually diseased. It is almost always a hidden tiny little nerve that really is all at fault. This obscure nerve—the Cardiac, or Heart Nerve—simply needs, and must have, more power, more stability, more controlling, more governing strength. Without that the Heart must continue to fail, and the stomach and kidneys also have these same controlling nerves.

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Your men are all strong men and ought to be with us. Besides, it weakens our discipline."

Raymond interrupted. "We've been all over that before. I am not concerned with your discipline. I have no quarrel with my men. They are satisfied with our present arrangement. You're going at this back end to. If you would turn your attention to reforming mining laws and crushing out these speculative owners of mining lands, you would really be doing something, but your assault on men who are paying labor full wages weakens your case."

Kelly opened the door and entered while Raymond was speaking.

"What's the meaning of all this?" he asked.

Raymond coldly replied, "These men have come to serve a final notice on us to discharge our nonunion men or shut down."

"Not at all!" cried out Carter, who feared Kelly. "All we ask is that you recommend your men to join the union."

Brock sprang to his feet again. "Oh, rats! What's the use beating around the bush? We know that you fellows are the backbone of the free miners' association and that they would all come in if you said so, and we need you and your men. We want you to head 'em our way."

Kelly smiled. "Ye're not asking much. So far as I'm concerned, Carter, I don't believe a word in you and your schoolboy, tomfool antics. From the very start ye've gone wrong. You began by defending a lot of drunken blaggards, and that queered ye with every decent man. Go back to camp, arrest Denver Dan, San Juan Jones, Hob Smith and the rest of the bunch and send them down to the valley as a peace offering; then serve notice on the men that blew up the Red Star that they'll be hung tomorrow morning. By that time I'll begin to believe in you and your love for the honest workin' man."

Carter, utterly unable to stem the flood of Kelly's indignant speech, sat with drooping head. He stammered, "You—you're a traitor to labor."

"I am a traitor to nothing that is good, but I am worn out and weary with your yellin', cursin', gamblin', drunken loons that assume to be workmen. I have more respect for the weak little dagoes, for they do want work and need it, but the bums that fill the streets are a sorry threat to a decent man, let alone a decent woman. And here's Jack Munro"—Kelly turned, and the smile died out of the young desperado's face—"he's chief of a gang of hoodlum cowboys and still pretends to be keepin' the peace. If you want to help the cause of labor, Jack, me boy, close the saloons while this strike is going on, protect the women and children, arrest and throw out the men that blew up the Red Star mine—you know who they are—"

"I do not," said Munro.

Kelly was likelier in his wrath, and the group of labor leaders covered before him like revealed conspirators. Only Munro seemed unabashed.

"That's all well enough to demand, Matt, but to carry it out is another story."

"Because ye're one o' them," answered Kelly. "You boast of your power. Ye're a man of education—some say military education. You know what discipline is, but when it comes to controlling your men from insulting strangers and abusing women you set down. Now, listen to me. This is my last word on this subject. We are neutral. We have had no part in this row, and we will take none. Go on, work out ye're jackass plan, rouse the whole state, make a political issue of yourselves, but leave Raymond and Kelly out of it. Leave our men alone. They are satisfied and earnin' good wages. As for my good advice, take it or leave it. If you take it ye win; if you leave it ye lose. I am for peace. I've done everything a man could do to kape the peace; I must do so. Everything I have in the world is here—the mine, me wife and the babies. I want no quarrel with any man, especially with a miner, for I have worked for wages half me life, but I tell ye once more, boys, this mob business must not circle round that little cabin over there. If wan of your loafers so much as puts his toe against my door I'll kill him where he stands."

He ended with a hoarse intensity that silenced the men who listened, and after a pause Raymond remarked, very quietly:

"I stand with Kelly on this matter. Is there anything further you want to say?"

Brock shook his heavy shoulders, as if to clear himself of a weight, and clumsily rose. "I reckon that's all—you stay out?"

"We stand clear," said Raymond.

Carter fumbled for his hat. "Of course you mustn't think we blame you, Kelly. You are right enough from your point of view, but what would become of labor if we all stood aside?"

"I don't know," said Kelly. "There are wise men who have studied this problem—Henery Garge, for instance—ye might look into his way. I'm dom-

sure your ways of violence will never cure the evil."

As they stood on the threshold Brock spoke with a vicious sneer, "We'll report your answer."

As the door closed behind them Raymond turned to Kelly with a look of great solemnity. "Matt, this means war for us."

"Munro will stand between us and the union."

"I doubt it, Matt. His power will vanish the moment he goes against the wishes of the miners. He couldn't feed his men and their horses without the union. He is in their pay, for all his boasting."

Kelly looked thoughtful. "That is true."

"Matt, you better take the wife and babies down to the valley."

"I've spoken of that, but the little wife will not go without me."

"Then you must go. It is not safe for them here. The people below are in deadly earnest. They're coming up here with an army next time. You better take your little family and get out."

"I can't do that. I can't leave here. Do you take the wife and the boys down to the Springs while I stay here and see that the work goes on."

They tossed this duty to and fro, each arguing in favor of the other, till Raymond said, "Very well; let's leave it to the wife."

As they stepped out into the night Kelly cried out: "Here comes the snow. Munro's pickets have a hard night before them."

Kelly's sons were fast asleep in their bed, but the small mother still sat at her sewing, her head haloed with lamplight.

"I'm glad you've come," she said. "My heart is lonely without Ann. Do you think she'll ever come back, Rob?"

"I hope so," he replied, but his voice had no heartiness of conviction in it.

"I'm glad she's away—just now," said Kelly, coming straight to business, as usual. "And Rob thinks you'd better go down to the Springs also."

"And leave you here, Matt Kelly? I will not. You'd be sure to get into trouble at once. If I go, you go."

Kelly looked at Raymond with a comical lift of one eyebrow. "That settles it—we stay!"

"There's going to be trouble," warned Raymond, "and you ought not to be here, Mrs. Kelly."

"The fightin' will not be on the hill. You said so yourself, Matt."

"I did, and I think so still, but at the same time 'twould be safer far if you and the lads were in the Springs."

"What has happened tonight, Matt? You were not so blue when you went out."

He told her quietly while she rocked to and fro in her low chair. She seemed scarcely to listen, but at the end she said: "You did right. I am heart-sick of these drinkin', carousin' miners who go about making trouble for others. The most of them have no one but themselves, and they don't care what they do. If Jack Munro is the man he boasts himself to be all the time, he'll come in here and protect his friends."

"Jack is up against a hard streak o' weather. He's either got to stand in with the union or put up the money to

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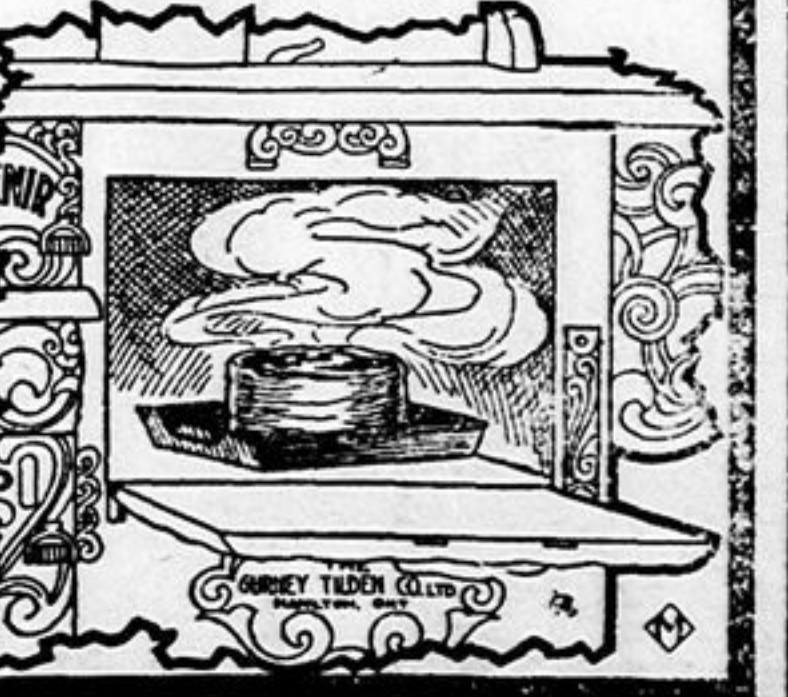
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reed and take care of his men and horses, and that's no small item when the snows have covered the grass. If he should join us, his power would be gone. He can't—"

A knock at the door brought a smile to Kelly's face. "Talk of the devil and he's at your elbow! Come!"

Munro entered the room hurriedly, like a man pursued. His collar was rolled high and his hat pulled low. He shut the door behind him quickly, but when he turned his usual devil-may-care grin was on his face.

"Boys, this is on the q. t. I mustn't be seen down here any more. This neutral game is up. They're going to make war on you independent operators, sure thing, and I can't hobnob with you. Oh, but they're wild up the street

"Yes, but there are a whole lot of other considerations. I can't afford to play into the hands of those cursed, one lung duds. If it were a question of men like you and Kelly here—but it isn't. The Red Star company is made up of a set of pirates, who batten on labor like a lot of turkey buzzards. They have no regard for any human rights."

"These howling dervishes up the street are not concerned with rights, not even their own."

Munro was in deadly earnest now. "That's where you are wrong, old man. In their blind, fool way they are fighting labor's battles."

"It's a queer mixup," said Kelly, with a sigh. "I have a hatred of them duds meself. They want to run our end of the county and their own too. They despise a workin' man. They dodge 'im as if he were a snake."

(To be Continued.)

MEN ARE QUEER.

Wouldn't there be a roar when they went home to their meals if they had to climb up on a high stool in front of a table on which there is no cloth, and eat their meals in that fashion, yet the majority of men, when they go to a restaurant to eat will pick out the high stool and the feed board with no cloth on it in preference to a comfortable chair with a cloth covered table. A man will borrow a chew of tobacco and will set his teeth into a plug right over where some other man has gnawed out a chew. Offer him a piece of pie at home from which his wife or one of the children has taken a bite, and he will holler his head off. At home he will not drink out of a glass or cup from which some one of the family has been drinking. Call him into the back stall of a livery stable, pull out a bottle and he sticks the neck half way down his throat in order to get a swig, after half a dozen fellows had the neck of the same bottle down their throat. A man is a queer duck.

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AGAINST THE LAW.

A man was fined five dollars and costs in the Toronto police court the other day for using profane language on the street. A policeman overheard him, and placed him under arrest. It does not appear to be known to the people at large that the use of profanity is forbidden by law, and that one citizen may cause the arrest of another for this offence, and that any policeman is as liable to dismissal for failing in his duty in this as in any other respect. The law is a good one, and there is need for its more strict enforcement. Boys and young men swear and use the most repulsive language in public places, deriving from the gutter some notion that their abandoned conversation makes men of them, whereas those forced to listen to them experienced no sensation but one of utter disgust. There should be more arrests and fines—there should be a crusade against this senseless evil.—Saturday Night.