

A CAPTAIN IN THE RANKS

By George Carey Eggleston

(Continued from Last Week.)

SYNOPSIS.

Captain Guilford Duncan, C. S. A., takes part in the last fight, at Appomattox, and leaves the army. He then determines to go to Cairo, Ill. Although well educated and a lawyer, Captain Duncan is without family or money, and works his passage to Cairo. Here he saves Captain Hallam's cotton from fire, and Captain Hallam, a modern "captain of industry," hires Captain Duncan, and quickly advances in his employer's estimation. He saves Captain Hallam's coal fleet from destruction by a storm, and is made a partner by Captain Hallam. The young man becomes a force of good among the young men of Cairo. Barbara Verne, a young lady, runs the boarding house in which Captain Duncan takes his meals. Captain Duncan is thanked by Barbara for saving her from annoyance by mischievous boys. He determines to call upon her.

Captain Duncan invites Barbara to a dance. He incurs the enmity of Napper Tandy, a capitalist, a rival of Captain Hallam, by making of the latter's coal mine a paying property, in competition with one of Tandy's properties. At the coal mine Duncan meets an old acquaintance, Dick Temple, now working as a miner. Dick Temple suggests a way to increase the output of the mine and is appointed engineer. XVI—Duncan, who is in love with Barbara. Napper Tandy attempts to bribe Duncan. Duncan proposes to Barbara. She tells him she cannot give him a decided answer. Napper Tandy circulates the story that Duncan has asked him for a bribe. To retaliate, Hallam proposes to buy sufficient shares in Tandy's bank to elect Duncan president. Dick Temple is commissioned by Hallam to buy the bank stock. Barbara tells Duncan she cannot marry him because she is the daughter of a thief. Temple succeeds in buying the bank stock. Barbara tells Duncan she cannot marry him because she is the daughter of a thief. Temple succeeds in buying the bank stock. Duncan learns from Barbara that her father was an embezzler and a suicide. She tells him to wait a year before she finally rejects or accepts his proposal. XXIV—Captain Hallam tells Duncan of the plan to make him president of the Tandy bank. XXIV—Captain Hallam and Duncan are interested in the planning of a railroad to connect Cairo and the east. Tandy seems to be working secretly against the proposed road. The permission to build the road requires that between two towns in different counties a car shall pass before a certain date. XXV and XXVI—Duncan discovers Tandy's irregular dealings with the bank and forces him to make restitution. Tandy gives up his Cairo investments.

CHAPTER XXIX. IT was December now, and winter had set in early. Temple found it exceedingly difficult to secure the assistant surveyors, rodmen, chainmen and the rest, whose services were absolutely necessary, but by dint of hard work he at last completed the organization of his several engineering corps and set to work surveying the line, locating it, establishing grades and the like. Hurry it as he might, the work was very slow because of the bad weather, but at least it went forward, and early in January gangs of men were sent into each county to make a show, at least, of construction work and thus to avoid all possibility of the forfeiture of the county and town subscriptions. The greatest difficulty encountered was in meeting the requirement that a car should actually cross the line between the two counties by noon of the 15th of March. That part of the line was peculiarly difficult of access. It could be reached only by a twenty-five mile journey across country, over roads which in the winter were well nigh impassable. In order to build any sort of railroad line at the point involved it was necessary to carry across country all the tools, earth cars and construction materials, together with a large company of workmen. Huts must be built to shield the men from the severity of the weather, and provisions for them must be hauled over twenty-five miles of swamp roads. In order to do so streams must be bridged for the wagons and in many places the road must be "corduroyed" for many miles of its extent—that is to say, it must be paved with unwhew logs laid side by side across it. It was near the end of February, therefore, before anything like systematic construction at that point could be got under way. Meanwhile Duncan's mission to New York had been successful, though it was attended by much of difficulty. He had secured the necessary stock subscriptions, and, better still, he had succeeded in inducing one of the great trunk lines of the east to guarantee a considerable bond issue on the part of the new road under an agreement that when completed it should be made in effect an extension of the eastern company's lines. The only problem now was to prevent that diversion of the proposed line which "Lanc" was openly trying to bring about. The New York capitalists

to hurry it Temple made the mistake of working the men overtime. As an inducement Hallam promised to increase the double wage per hour, which the men were already receiving, to triple wages on condition that they should work in two instead of three shifts. As the work was exhausting in its nature and must be done under a deluge of bone chilling rain, this over-tasking of the men quickly showed itself in their loss of energy and courage. Some of them threw up the employment and made their way homeward. All of them were suffering and discouraged. But at the end of the three days the rude crib was so far finished that even should the floods come it would still be possible to continue the work of filling in by running the dirt cars to the slowly advancing end of the temporary track and dropping their contents into the crib.

Thus the work went slowly on. The men daily showed more and more the effects of their overwork, for each was working for twelve hours of each twenty-four now. They grew sullen and moody of mind and slow of movement and of response. Every day a few more of them gave up the task, and Duncan began seriously to fear that a wholesale quitting would occur in spite of the enormous wages he was paying.

With his soldier experience he knew the symptoms of demoralization from overstrain, and he began now to recognize them in the conduct and countenances of the men. His soldier life had taught him also how large a part feeding plays in such a case as this. He therefore minutely inspected the out of door mess kitchen and found it in charge of careless and incompetent negro women who knew neither how to cook nor how to make food attractive in appearance.

"The men eat a good deal," he said to Temple, "but they are not properly nourished. I must remedy that. We simply must win this struggle, Dick, and we've only six days more. If we can keep the men at work for six days and nights more we'll either finish or finally fail."

It was Duncan's habit every evening to call up Barbara's house on the telegraph and hold a little conversation with her over the wire. She was thus kept minutely informed of how matters were going with him, and she was well nigh sleepless with anxiety lest he fall in this crowding undertaking.

Turning away from Temple, he went to the telegraph instrument, opened the circuit and called Barbara. He explained his new difficulty to her and the vital importance of providing better cooked and more abundant food.

The men have been living on mess pork and "salt horse" for weeks, and both the meat and half baked dough served to them for bread are enough to break the spirit even of veteran soldiers. Now, I want your help in earnest. If we can keep the men at work for six days more, we shall have a chance at least of success. If we can't, failure is inevitable. I want you to buy a lot of the best fresh provisions you can get in Cairo and send them here early tomorrow morning in charge of somebody who knows how to hustle. Send one of my bank clerks if you can't do better. Send some molasses, too—in kegs, not barrels; barrels take too long to handle. Send eggs, butter, rice, macaroni, onions, turnips, cheese and above all, some really good coffee.

Then, if possible, I want you to send me one or two cooks who really know what "cooking" means. Don't hesitate about wages. We'll pay any price. If you can only find two cooks who know the difference between broiling beef and burning it. Till your cooks come, I'm going to take charge of the cooking myself.

And he did. Guilford Duncan, distinguished man of affairs, associate of financial nabobs, bank president and president of this railroad company, sat hour after hour on a log or squatted before an outdoor fire, doing his best to make palatable such foodstuffs as were to be found in the camp.

"It's a sorry task," he said to Temple. "The stuff isn't fit to eat at best. I wonder who bought it. God help the commissary who should have issued it as rations, even in the starvation days of the Army of Northern Virginia. The men would have made meat of him. But I can at least make it look a little more palatable and perhaps improve its flavor a little in the cooking till Barbara sends fresh supplies and some capable cooks."

"What answer did she make to you when you telegraphed?" "Hardly any at all," he answered. "She clicked out, 'I'll do my best,' and then shut off the circuit without even a word of encouragement or sympathy. I'm seriously afraid she is ill. You know she shares our anxiety, and she hasn't been sleeping much, I imagine, since our troubles reached a crisis."

"That's your fault," said Temple. "You've told her too much of detail. If you ever get married you'll learn to practice certain reserves with your wife—for her sake."

"No, I won't." "But why so sure?" "Because if I ever marry, my wife will be a certain little woman whose fixed determination it will be to share both my triumphs and my perplexities, especially the perplexities. Now, I've got to dish up and carve this kettleful of corned beef, and you, I imagine, might somewhat expedite the work of the earth shoveler by lending them the light of your countenance for a time."

Duncan had scarcely finished the dishing up of the unsavory corned beef, the only merit of which was that it was sufficiently cooked, when a dispatch came to him from the New York bankers whom he had left in charge of the company's interests in the financial capital. They telegraphed:

Tandy reports that you have completely failed to build across county line. The others give notice that, if so, they will defect road to Paducah. Tandy offers subscriptions of vast sum from counties, towns, Paducah and other Memphis and

unto road. What answer shall we give? Answer by telegraph. This message acted like an electric shock. It quickened every pulse of Duncan's being. It nerved him to new endeavor and renewed determination. He promptly replied: Tell them to wait till time is up. They have given their promise, and I have given mine. I will keep mine. They must keep theirs. Tell them I'm not dead yet. Then Duncan went to inspect the progress of the work.

(To be continued.)

SUNDAY AT THE CHURCHES. First M. E. Church. Sermon topics for Sunday: Morning, "Queen Esther's Devotion to Her People;" evening, "Folly Under a King's Crown." The reading room in the front hall of the church is open daily from 9 a. m. to 10 p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to attend the services and to make use of the reading room. Presbyterian Church. Morning worship, 11 o'clock, "Welching." Sunday school, 12:15; Y. P. S. C. E., 7; evening worship, 8. "See For Yourself." Baptist Church. All the regular Sunday services will be observed at the Baptist church. The pastor preaching morning and evening on the following themes, "A Joyful Christianity" and "Paul's Last Appeal."

First Lutheran Church. Morning service in Swedish at 10:45; evening service in English, at 8; mid-week service on Wednesday evening at 7:30. All are cordially invited to attend these services. Congregational Church. Services will be held morning and evening. The pastor will preach and will be pleased to have all the Congregationalists in the city present. Morning service at 11 o'clock, subject, "Things for Christians to Carefully Note." Evening service at 8 o'clock, subject, "The Proper Spirit of Service." Sunday school at 12:20. Midweek meeting, Wednesday at 8 p. m. Strangers and visitors in the city will find a welcome at all these services. All residents in the city not connected with other churches are cordially invited to make this their church home.

CITY NOTICES. NOTICE OF RECEIVING BIDS BY CITY. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, THAT up to the hour of 2 o'clock p. m., on Monday, the 17th day of September, 1906, the Committee on Streets and Public Ways of the Common Council of the City of Astoria, will receive sealed bids for the improvement of the crossing of Bond street and 6th street, as ordered improved by ordinance No. 3290, approved on the 6th day of September, 1906. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids. J. H. HANSEN, P. A. STANGLAND, J. J. ROBINSON, Committee on Streets and Public Ways. NOTICE. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, THAT the Common Council of the City of Astoria has declared its determination and intention to construct a sewer along the West side of Thirty-seventh street in Adair's Port of Upper Astoria from the North line of Duane street to the North line of Commercial street. Said sewer shall be constructed of vitrified terra cotta sewer pipe 14 inches in diameter and on the proper grade to admit of sufficient drainage, and in matters of detail said sewer shall be constructed according to the plans and specifications therefor to be prepared by the City Surveyor as hereinafter provided, and any matter of construction and drainage found necessary to make the improvement safe or substantial shall be done by the contractor whether specified or not, without extra charge. That the costs and expenses of constructing said improvement shall be defrayed by special assessment upon the lots, lands and premises benefitted by the same which said lots, lands and premises are included in the special assessment district including all lots, lands, and premises so benefitted, to-wit: Lots 3, 4, 5 and 6 in Block 15, and lots 1, 2, 7 and 8 in Block 14, all in Adair's Port of Upper Astoria, as laid out and recorded by John Adair and generally known as Adair's Astoria in Clatsop County, Oregon. OLOF ANDERSON, Auditor and Police Judge of the City of Astoria. 10t

Now that Trepoif is dead, those who look like him can come out of the cellar.

AT THE STAR NEXT WEEK. Mr. Alec T. Layne, leading man of the popular Mack Swain Company, which opens at the Star Theater, in this city, on tomorrow, Monday, night, in The Sidewalks of New York.

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