

# The Main Chance

BY  
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## CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

Saxton was walking beside Haridan in the lower hall. He felt an impulse to express gratitude for his rescue from the loneliness of the twilight; but Haridan, talking incessantly, and with hands thrust easily into his trousers' pockets, led the way into the reading room.

"Hello, Wheaton," he called to a man who sat reading a newspaper, and who now rose on seeing a stranger with Haridan. "This is Mr. Saxton, Mr. Wheaton."

"Oh, yes," said the man introduced as Wheaton. "I wondered whether I shouldn't see you here. Mr. Porter told me you had come."

Wheaton seemed very serious, and had not much to say. He had just come home, from a tedious trip to the western part of the State, he said, on an errand for his bank. He was tall, slim and dark. There was a suggestion of sleepy indifference in his slack eyes, though he had a well-established reputation for energy and industry.

"Mr. Porter told me you were quartered here. I hope they can make you comfortable. I'm personally relieved that you have come. Your Boston friends were getting very impatient with us. We shall do all in our power to aid you; but of course Mr. Porter has said all that to you." His smile was by a movement of the lips, and his eyes did not seem to participate in it. He did not refer again to possible business relations with Saxton, but turned the conversation into general channels. They sat together for an hour, Haridan, as was his way in any company, doing most of the talking. They seemed to have the club house to themselves. Now and then one of the negro servants came and looked in upon them sleepily. A clerk at the desk in the hall read in peace. A party of young people could be heard entering by the side door set apart for women; and muffled echoes of their gaily reached the trio in the reading room.

"That's back in the incurables' ward," said Haridan, in explanation to Saxton. "It isn't nice of you to speak of the gentler sex in that way," admonished Wheaton.

"Oh, there are girls and girls," said Haridan, wearily. "It does seem to me that Mabel Margrave is always hungry. Why can't she do her eating at home?"

"He's simply jealous," Wheaton remarked to Saxton. "He always acts that way when he hears a girl in the ladies' dining room, and doesn't dare go back and break in on some other fellow's party."

"When you show signs of mental decay, it's time for us to go home, Wheaton," Haridan held out his hand to Saxton. "I'm glad you're here, and you may be sure we'll try to make you like us. Wheaton and I live in a barracks around the corner, with a few other homeless wanderers. I hope to see you there. Don't be afraid of the Chinaman at the door. My cell is up one flight and to the right."

"And don't overlook me there," Wheaton interposed. "I suppose we shall see you down town very often. Mr. Haridan is the only man in Clarkson who has no visible means of support. The rest of us are pretty busy; but that doesn't mean that we shan't be glad to see you at the Clarkson National."

## CHAPTER III.

William Porter lived well, as became a first citizen of Clarkson. His house stood at the summit of a hill near the end of Varney street, and the gradual slope leading up to it was a pretty park, whose lawn and shrubbery showed the intelligent care of a good gardener. The dry air was still hot as John Saxton climbed the cement walk which wound over the slope at the proper degree to bring the greatest comfort to pedestrians. The green of the lawn was grateful to Saxton's eyes, which dwelt with relief on the fine spray of the rotary sprinklers that blessed coolly at the end of long lines of hose. Interspersed among the indigenous scrub oaks were elms, maples and cedars, and the mottled bark of white birches showed here and there. The lawn was broken by beds of cannae, and it was evident that the owner of the place had a taste for landscape gardening and spent his money generously in cultivating it. The house itself was of red brick dating from those years in which a Mansard roof and a tower were thought indispensable in serious domestic architecture. There was a broad veranda on the river side, accessible through French windows of the same architectural period.

A maid admitted Saxton and left him to find his own way into the drawing-room, through which a breeze was blowing pleasantly from across the valley. Saxton sat in a deep wicker chair, mopping his forehead. He heard a light step crossing the hall, and a girl, still singing softly to herself, passed back of him to a little stand which stood by one of the drawing room windows. The back of the wicker chair hid him; she was wholly unconscious that any one was there. The breath of the sweet peas which she was distributing suddenly sweetened the cool air of the room. Seeing that the girl did not know of his presence in the house, and that she would certainly discover him when she turned to go, he rose and faced her.

"I beg your pardon!"

"Oh! The sweet peas fell to the floor, and the girl looked anxiously toward the hall door."

"I beg your pardon," Saxton repeated. "I think—I fear—I wasn't announced. But I believe Mr. Porter is expecting me."

"Yes!" The girl looked at Job for

the first time. He was taking the situation seriously, and was sincerely sorry for having startled her. "Father will be here very soon, I think." She moved toward the door with dignity, ignoring the fallen flowers, and Saxton stepped forward and picked them up.

"Allow me," The girl took them from him, a little uncertainly and guardedly, then returned to the vase and placed the flowers in it.

"Thank you very much," she said. "I think I hear my father now." She went to the outer door and opened, inclining her head slightly as she passed John, who also heard Mr. Porter's voice outside. He was remonstrating with the gardener about the position of the sprinklers, which he wished reset in keeping with ideas of his own.

"Well, Evelyn?" he said, as he came up the steps. Saxton could hear the young woman making an explanation in low tones to her father. Mr. Porter stood suddenly in the door.

"Well, this beats me," he began, effusively, coming forward and wringing Saxton's hand. "I'm not going to try to explain. I simply forgot, that's all." He took Saxton's arm and turned him toward the door where the girl still stood, smiling.

"Evelyn, this is Mr. Saxton. He's come to dine with us, but I forgot all about it. See here, Evelyn, you've got to square this for me," he concluded, and she came forward and shook hands with Saxton.

"I don't know how it can be squared." This is only one of father's lapses, Mr. Saxton. You may be sure he didn't mean to do it."

"No, indeed," declared Porter, "but I'm ashamed of myself." He waved the young people to seats and vanished into the hall.

Porter returned and launched into statistics as to the number of trees that had been planted in the State by school children during the past year. The maid came to announce dinner, and Porter talked on as he led the way to the dining room. As they were taking their seats a boy of 12 took the place opposite Saxton.

"This is my brother Grant," said Miss Porter, turning to the boy, who at once became interested in Saxton.

"I'm going to be a ranchman," the lad declared. "Father's going to buy me the Poindexter ranch some day."

"That's one of Mr. Saxton's properties. Maybe he'd trade it to you for a tin whistle."

"Is it as bad as that?" asked Saxton. "Just wait until you see it. It's pretty bad."

"The house must have been charming," said Miss Porter.

"And that's about all it was," replied her father.

It was warmer outside than in, but Porter pretended that it was pleasant out of doors, and insisted that there was always a breeze on the hill at night. Haridan appeared at the step presently. They all rose as he came up, and he said to Saxton as he shook hands with him: "I see you've found the way to headquarters. All roads lead up to this Alpine height—and I fear—I fear—that all roads lead down again," he added, with a doleful sigh, and laughed. He began making himself greatly at home. He assured Mr. Porter, with amiable insolence, that his veranda chairs were the most uncomfortable ones he knew, and went to fetch himself a better seat from the hall.

"Mr. Haridan likes to be comfortable," said Miss Porter in his absence.

"But he finds pleasure in making others comfortable, too," Saxton ventured.

"Oh, he's the very kindest of men," Miss Porter affirmed.

"What a nuisance you are, Warry," said Porter, as the young man fussed about to find a place for his chair. "We were all very easy here till you came. Even the breeze has died out."

Saxton got up to go presently and Haridan rose with him. He and Saxton went down the walk together.

"They seem to have struck up an acquaintance," observed Mr. Porter.

"Mr. Saxton is very nice," said Evelyn. "Oh, he's all right," said her father, easily.

## CHAPTER IV.

John Saxton trotted his pony through a broken gate into a great yard that had once been sown in blue grass, and at the center of which lay the crumbled ruins of a fountain. Before he could make his presence known, a frowny man in corduroy emerged from the great front door and came toward him.

"My name's Saxton, and you must be Snyder."

"Correct," said the man, and they shook hands. "Walk in and help yourself." He led the pony toward the outbuildings, while Saxton viewed the site

before him with interest. He had been making a careful inspection of all the properties that had fallen to his care. This had necessitated a good deal of traveling. He had begun in Colorado and worked eastward, going slowly, and getting the best advice obtainable as to the value of his principals' holdings. Much of their property was practically worthless. Title had been gained under foreclosure to vast areas which had no value. A waterworks plant stood in the prairie where there had once been a Kansas town. The place was depopulated and the smokestack stood as a monument to blighted hopes. Ranch houses were inhabited by squatters, who had not been on his books at all, and who paid no tribute to Boston. He was viewed with suspicion by those tenants, and on inquiry at the county seats, he found that they were lawless men, and that it would be better for him to let them alone. It was patent that they would not pay rent, and to eject them merely in the maintenance of a principle involved useless expense and violence.

"This certainly beats them all," Saxton muttered aloud.

He had reached in his itinerary what his papers called the Poindexter property. He had found that the place was famous throughout this part of the country for the idiosyncrasies of its sometime owners, three young men who had come out of the East to show how the cattle business should be managed. They had secured an immense acreage and built a stone ranch house whose curious architecture imparted to the Platte Valley a touch of medievalism that was little appreciated by the neighboring cattlemen. One of the owners, a Philadelphian named Poindexter, who had a weakness for architecture, contributed the building and his two associates bought the cattle. There were one thousand acres of rolling pasture here, much of it lying along the river, and a practical man could hardly have failed to succeed; but their disease in the herd and inexperience in buying and selling had wrought the ranchmen's destruction. Before their money was exhausted, Poindexter and his associates lived in considerable state, and entertained the friends who came to see them according to the best usages of Eastern country life within, and their own mild approximation of Western life without. Tom Poindexter's preceptor in architecture, an elderly gentleman with a sense of humor, had found a pleasure which he hardly dared to express in the medieval tone of the house and buildings.

"There's a remnant of the Poindexter herd out there somewhere," Wheaton had said to Saxton. "The fellow Snyder, that I put in as a caretaker, ought to have gathered up the loose cattle by this time; that's what I told him to do when I put him there."

Saxton turned and looked out over the rolling plain. A few rods away lay the river, and where it curved nearest the house stood a group of cottonwoods, like sentinels drawn together for colloquy. Scattered here and there over the plain were straggling herds.

There was much in the place to appeal to Saxton's quiet humor. The house was two stories high and there was a great hall, with an immense fireplace at one end. The sleeping rooms opened on a gallery above the hall. An effort had been made to give the house the appearance of Western wildness by introducing a great abundance of skins of wild beasts—a highly dishonest bit of decorating, for they had been bought in Chicago. Under one wing of the stairway, which divided to left and right at the center of the hall, was the dining room; under the other was the ranch office.

"Those fellows thought a good deal of their stomachs," said Snyder, as Saxton opened and shut the empty drawers of the sideboard.

"I suppose our mortgage covers the sunset, too," Saxton said. Nearly every portable thing of value had been removed, and evidently in haste; but the heavy oak chairs and the table remained. Snyder did his own modest cooking in the kitchen, which was in great disorder. The floor of the office was littered with scraps of paper. The original tenants had evidently made a quick settlement of their business affairs before leaving. Snyder did his own modest cooking in the kitchen, which was in great disorder.

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# PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS IN BRIEF

## Tuesday, July 6.

Washington, July 6.—The Republican majority of the senate finance committee today stirred up a hornets' nest by reporting the new schedule of tobacco taxes as having been recommended when it had not even been submitted to the minority members, much less laid before a meeting of the whole committee. Aldrich was forced to back water and recognize the rights of the minority.

Aldrich said that he would call a meeting of the finance committee for tomorrow morning, giving the minority members a chance to express their opinion.

All sections of the bill that senators do not desire to reserve for further amendment will now be agreed to en bloc. The senate then will consider the tobacco amendment, the only amendment not adopted in committee of the whole.

## Monday, July 5.

Washington, July 5.—By unanimous vote the senate today adopted the resolution submitting to the state legislatures the income tax amendment to the Federal constitution. Then it devoted its attention to the administrative features of the tariff bill and adopted them. The tobacco schedule will be considered tomorrow with a few other uncompleted details and then the bill will be reported from committee of the whole to the senate. The only subject likely to provoke debate is the tobacco schedule. The proceedings after the bill is reported will be brief and the bill will then go to conference.

## Saturday, July 3.

Washington, July 3.—Senator Aldrich achieved another sweeping victory this afternoon when, by a vote of more than 2 to 1, the maximum and minimum feature of the senate tariff bill was passed. This goes into effect on March 1, 1910. It empowers the president to add 25 per cent ad valorem to all existing schedules, whether on the free list or dutiable, to those countries discriminating against the United States.

In other words, where foreign nations are disposed to accept trade with America on the basis of the administrative tariff bill, soon to be enacted, the statute will not be elastic, but will stand as passed. But where nations prohibit, by excessive taxes, goods produced in this country, the president may retaliate by the simple issuance of a proclamation adding 25 per cent ad valorem to everything coming into American ports from such restrictive nations.

The bill aims particularly at France. The French people, as well as the Germans, but the latter to a less obnoxious extent, fearful of the progress of the American manufacturer, have been raising their tariff after item, so it was explained today, until now American goods are almost prohibited from entering French and German territories.

There remain 17 other administrative features of the tariff bill to dispose of before it goes to the house. The report is tonight that the senate will have each of them out of the way by Thursday, and that on Monday, July 12, the lower branch of congress will begin the consideration of the measure.

## Friday, July 2.

Washington, July 2.—The corporation tax amendment suggested by President Taft, drawn by Attorney General Wickersham and presented to the senate by Chairman Aldrich, of the committee on finance, is an integral part of the tariff bill as that bill now stands.

The senate reached a vote on the proposition shortly before adjourning at 7 o'clock this evening, and the amendment was agreed to by the large vote of 60 to 11, with all modifying amendments disposed of, many Democrats voting for the amendment with most of the Republicans. The test vote was on the substitution of the corporation tax amendment for the income tax provision, and on that vote 45 senators cast their ballots in the affirmative and 31 in the negative.

## Thursday, July 1.

Washington, July 1.—The senate "came within one" today of agreeing to vote next Tuesday on the entire income tax amendment to the tariff bill, including the corporation tax substitute. The compact was prevented by the objection of Bulkeley.

There were several speeches today, Borah leading off in favor of the income tax and Root advocating the corporation tax but opposing the income tax. It was evident throughout the entire day that the corporation tax had failed to arouse as much interest in the senate as had been expected. During the debate today Bourne, of Oregon, predicted that the corporation tax would result in publicity of corporation affairs and thus prove of great service to the public.

## Wednesday, June 30.

Washington, June 30.—The income tax was practically the only subject, and Cummins, of Iowa, and Borah, of

Manufacturers Are Aroused.

Washington, July 7.—Proposed increases in the internal revenue taxes on all forms of manufactured tobacco have brought a veritable hornets' nest about the heads of the senate committee on finance. An estimate of the increased revenues that would be produced was received by the senate committee today. If no decrease in consumption is occasioned by the proposed increase, it would raise about \$20,000,000 more than now collected.

Idaho, the only speakers before the senate today.

Borah was heard toward the close of the session, when the Iowa senator yielded the floor, which he had held since yesterday. He took for his text the declaration made yesterday by Aldrich that he would vote for the corporation tax amendment only as a means of defeating the income tax, and without resorting to personalities, he criticized the position of the chairman of the finance committee, who had presented the corporation tax amendment to the senate.

Estimating the total revenues under the Aldrich-Payne bill at \$360,000,000, and those to be derived from the internal revenue at \$240,000,000, he predicted that at the end of the fiscal year 1911 there would be a deficit of not less than \$175,000,000. He therefore contended that the amendment of the tariff bill by the addition of an income tax was necessary in order to produce sufficient revenue.

## Nothing Doing in Ohio.

Washington, July 6.—President Taft has expressed himself as opposed to the plan of Secretary of the Treasury McVeagh to raise \$2,000,000 by an internal revenue tax of 2 cents a pound, flat rate, on oleomargarine. The dairymen, according to Representative Tawney, of Minnesota, chairman of the committee on appropriations, are opposed to the scheme. Secretary McVeagh has stated that he has no desire to introduce a bill to carry out his ideas unless "all interests" agreed on the terms. The objection of President Taft and the dairy interests will obviously be sufficient to make the introduction of such a bill futile.

## Change Treasury System.

Washington, July 2.—Changes in the daily cash system of the Treasury department to correct discrepancies in publication of balances were announced to take effect at once. The published record of receipts and disbursements issued by the bookkeeping and warrants division have never balanced with the daily cash statement because the bookkeeping and warrants office record on the daily statement transactions were not yet completed. The data will hereafter come from one source and will exactly tally.

## Taft to Get Expenses.

Washington, July 2.—The house committee on appropriations tomorrow will begin the preparation of a deficiency appropriation bill, the total of which, it is now believed, will approximate \$1,000,000. Included will be an appropriation of \$25,000 with which to pay the traveling expenses of the president, thus leaving intact his salary of \$75,000. Other items are \$200,000 to pay the expenses of this government's participation in the Brussels exposition of 1910, and \$106,000 for special assistants to the Department of Justice.

## Work on Locks in Fall.

Washington, July 2.—Preliminary work already has begun at Panama on the locks of the isthmian canal. By the end of the summer construction in force will commence on these important adjuncts for the great waterway. Today the Isthmian Canal commission opened proposals for furnishing a great quantity of castings and structural material for anchorage purposes, for the fitting of lock gates, and for other requisities for use in the lock construction. Most of this material will be embedded in the masonry work.

## Trainwrecks Less Fatal.

Washington, July 1.—An increase of 344 in the total of railroad casualties, but a decrease of 65 in the total of persons killed, as compared with the figures for the corresponding quarter last year, is shown for the months of January, February and March, 1909, by accident bulletin 31, issued today by the Interstate Commerce commission. During the months named 663 persons were killed and 122 were injured.

## Hartson is Named.

Washington, July 3.—The president today sent to the senate the nomination of M. T. Hartson, of Spokane, to be collector of internal revenue for Washington. He will succeed B. D. Crocker, whose resignation was called for to take effect September 1. Mr. Hartson is now postmaster of Spokane, and will be succeeded in that office by W. P. Edrus, endorsed by Representative Poindexter.

## Fear Dark Enumerators.

Washington, July 6.—Concerned about what they suppose to be the possibility that negroes may be sent into the homes of white residents of the South as census enumerators, Democratic members of congress will urge President Taft to give instructions that only white enumerators be employed in districts south of the Mason and Dixon line.

## Wickersham is Satisfied.

Washington, July 3.—With respect to the indictment found in the New York sugar cases, Attorney General Wickersham said today that the indictment spoke for itself, and he had nothing to add. In his opinion the administration of justice should be quiet, though effective, and not personal.

## Change in Bureau Chiefs.

Washington, July 3.—Rear Admiral William P. Potter today became chief of the bureau of navigation, retiring Rear Admiral John E. Pillsbury, retired.

## RAISES ITS PRICES.

Beef Trust Says Cattle Are Scarce and Corn High.

New York, July 5.—The beef trust has again ordered the price of its product raised. Fourteen cents a pound for pot roast to 28 cents for porterhouse and sirloin steaks is the price. Thirty cents will be demanded for the latter cuts in a few days, while average beef will cost the dealer 10 1/2 cents a pound, as against the hitherto prevailing price of 10 cents.

The high price of corn and the scarcity of cattle are the reasons assigned by the trust for the increase in prices. As to why cattle should be any scarcer now than at any other time no answer is forthcoming.

Retail butchers explain that the working people are too poor to buy beef; that there is a lessening in the demand and consequently a raising in the price. It is pointed out that Paten's corner in wheat has increased the demand for corn as an article of human consumption, and that therefore the price of that grain has so increased that it is no longer profitable to raise corn-fed cattle.

The officers of the beef trust in the East are very reticent in discussing the condition of the beef market. When an expression of opinion was sought from the representatives of the big leaders in the trust, such as Armour's and Swift's, the inquirer was referred from one official to another. Finally a vague statement was made to the effect that the market was normal and that existing prices were due to natural trade conditions.

## BODIES IN RUINS.

Work Suspended at Messina on Account of Hot Weather.

Rome, July 5.—Thousands of boxes of the victims of the December earthquake that devastated Messina are still in the ruins of that city and will not be dug out to receive burial until winter. In an effort to convince King Victor that it is doing every possible thing toward the ends desired in Messina, the Interior department today submitted its first comprehensive report. It is understood tonight that the king, though not doubting the honesty of the officials, was angry that there had been so much delay, and had demanded speedier work.

In reply to the accusation that no excavation had been made in the ruins, the Interior department declares it has been found necessary to suspend all work of this nature during the warm weather. Up to that time 30,000 bodies had been recovered. An average of 300 bodies were removed daily in April and 900 bodies were awaiting burial for lack of grave diggers.

## GOLD ORE AS BALLAST.

Santa Fe Road Bed Rich in Precious Metal.

Chicago, July 5.—Officials of the Santa Fe road are inclined to believe that through the accidental discovery of gold and copper in the ballast used on the Belen cut-off a new rich mining district will be developed in the Manzano mountains in Torrance county, New Mexico.

A fact that adds romantic interest to the gold discovery is that the region is adjacent to the deserted city, which is supposed to have been Spanish and which is known as Gran Quivira. There are legendary stories of old Spanish mines which are supposed to have been productive hundreds of years ago, but which were abandoned. Now that gold has been discovered in the region these stories are being revived and many are flocking into the mountains and are staking out claims everywhere.

The discovery of gold is largely due to one of the engineers of the company, who is located at the general offices in Chicago. Not long ago this engineer was walking track between Belen and Willard and while in a deep cut he picked up a chunk of ballast which had a chemical stain upon it. The stone was brought to Chicago, and it was found to be highly infused with gold. Some of the ballast which was being used on the Belen cutoff was then sent for and was found to assay about \$3 worth of gold to the ton.

## Four Killed in Cyclone.

Winnipeg, Man., July 5.—Reports received tonight from Southern Saskatchewan show that four persons were killed and more than 50 hurt, and that immense damage was done by the cyclone which swept that district late last night and early this morning. In the Gainsboro district three persons were killed and nearly 50 injured, while a child was killed near Carrievale. The cyclone struck first at Redvers, turned south toward Carrievale and Gainsboro, and then went east to Pearson, Manitoba.

## Educator Says Nothing is Right.

Denver, July 5.—Charging that the whole present day school system is radically wrong and that American homes and society are directly responsible for elements in the schools which corrupt morals and make for crime and criminals, J. C. McNeill, superintendent of schools at Memphis, Saturday dropped a bomb into the camp of the National Educational association's convention at the council meeting preparatory to the opening of the convention.

## Trust in No Danger.

New York, July 5.—There is little probability that there will be any prosecution of the sugar trust until August, when United States District Attorney Wise, who sailed Saturday for Europe, returns to New York. The failure of the Federal grand jury to file indictments in its investigation of the American Sugar Refining company adds to this impression.