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SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1911.

Propositions are favorable to an early completion of the fruitgrowers of the county into a Central Selling Agency, along the plan outlined at the Walla Walla conference. Nine associations of horticultural men have already endorsed the plan and the Wenatchee Commercial club has adopted the proposition favoring it, following the Walla Walla investigation. The Freewater growers are also in sympathy with the movement. Editorial endorsement has been obtained in the leading newspapers of the Northwest. It is pointed out that the growers have everything to gain by such an amalgamation in the way of power to adjust the supply of trade requirements, thereby insuring stable prices. Nothing will be lost that is not already lost through uncoordinated and selfish methods that divide efforts with identical interests. There have been some fears expressed that the proposition is a bigger one than the fruit growers can handle, but a leader is always found when a condition exists that calls for special talents. Nothing is more strikingly exemplified than in modern commerce, in this county, which always produces the needed men.

Subscriptions totaling \$100,000 were made in Chehalis last week to bond the Chehalis & Cowlitz Railway company. Despairing of getting an outside company to improve their transportation facilities, the people of Chehalis are going to build their own outlet. Similar propositions are going forward in other parts of the Northwest. Several Oregon communities expect to provide from their own resources what the big financial interests say cannot be furnished from all street. Delegates from all parts of Chelan, Okanogan and Douglas counties will assemble in Wenatchee soon to consider what steps can be taken to get a road built up the Columbia river to tap that rich section. The people of the Methow Valley are already at work on their own electric line. Thus, the resourcefulness of the Northwest is once more manifested.

Everett's going dry, has caused a condition of drought in the municipal treasury. To replenish it, an occupation tax is proposed which it is variously estimated will produce anywhere from \$50,000 to \$100,000. The special levy scales down from \$1000 on public utilities to a day's pay from the wage earner. Even the minister of the gospel will have to pay \$20 a year for the privilege of trying to save Everett. A fight is in prospect as many people oppose the council's revenue program. As has been pointed out, the new tax will hardly serve to encourage newcomers to locate in the City of Smokestacks.

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TRUXTON KING

A Story of ...Graustark

By GEORGE BARR M'CUTCHEON

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(Continued from First page.)

"much difference, my fine young fellow."

The glimmer of a light came bobbing up from somewhere behind Truxton. He could see the flickering shadows on the wall. Two men crept into the room a moment later. One of them carried a lantern; the other turned King's body over with his foot. Truxton saw that the three ruffians were



"BETTER SAVE YOUR BREATH, YOUNG FELLOW. YOU WON'T HAVE IT LONG."

great, brutal faced fellows, with bared arms that denoted toil as well as spoils. The third man grasped the prisoner by the feet, swearing in a language of his own. The Yankee desperado took his shoulders, and together, with earnest grunts, they followed the man with the lantern. He could see that they were crowding through a low, narrow passage, finally depositing him with scant courtesy upon the rocky floor of what proved to be a rather commodious cave.

Daylight streamed into this convenient "hole in the wall," lying upon his side, Truxton faced the opening that looked out upon the world. Near the opening stood the tall, gaunt figure of a man, thin shouldered and stooped. His back was to the captive, but King observed that the three men, with two companions, who sat at the back of the cave, never removed their gaze from the striking figure outlined against the sky.

The watcher turned slowly to take in the altered conditions behind him. King saw that he was old, gray haired and cadaverous. This, then, was the "old man," and he was not William Spantz.

"Your name is King, I believe," came from the thin lips of the old man.

"Yes. May I inquire?"

"No; you may not inquire. Put a gag in his mouth. I don't care to hear anything from him. Gag him and cut the rope from his feet. He may walk from now on."

Three men sprang to do his bidding. King felt in that instant that he was looking for the first time upon the features of the Iron Count, Marlaux the dishonored. He lay there helpless, speechless for many minutes, glancing at this cruel tyrant. It was enough that Marlaux suspected him of being in the way. To be suspected was to be condemned.

Marlaux was speaking. Truxton looked up, as at an executioner. The Iron Count sat upon a bowlder near his feet.

"We have met before. Perhaps you remember meeting my eye in Dame Babba's cabin—twice, I think. You remember, I see. Ha, ha! You were very slow not to have caught such an old man. I dare say you are wondering what I intend to do with you, now that I have you. Well, I am not the man to mince words. Mr. King, you are quite young, but the good die young. I am very old, you observe. I will not say that you are to die to-night or tomorrow or any day, for I do not know. I am going to send you to a court. Not an ordinary court, Mr. King, but one of extreme perspicacity. I fancy you will die before long. We can spare you. I do not approve of meddlers. It seems to be quite settled that you are a police agent."

The steady, cruel eyes fascinated King. He knew that he was in desperate straits.

"I am glad you called again at my temporary abode, Mr. King. Americans are always welcome; the sooner they come, the sooner it's over. It may interest you to know that I am very partial to Americans. Were I a cannibal I could eat them in relish. If I had my way, all Americans should be in heaven. The earth surely is not good enough nor big enough for them, and hell is already overcrowded. Yes, I love the Americans dearly. I should enjoy a similar visit from Mr. John Tullis. I expect him to visit me in my humble castle before many days. I should like to have him remain there until his dying day."

King shuddered.

"Night is coming. I must say farewell, my bold young friend. My way lies to the north."



This is merely a land of promise to me. You go southward, to the city of Edelweiss. But not through the gates; oh, no! There are other ways, as you will find. Goodby, my brave Sir Galahad; I may never see you again."

With a courtly bow he turned BOLD YOUNG from the tense FRIEND, muscled captive and directed his final instructions to the guards. With a curt nod to the men, he strode out through the mouth of the cave and was gone. Dusk had settled down upon mountain and valley. One of the men cut the rope that bound Truxton's feet.

"Get up," said the Newport man. "We've got to be movin'."

Still gagged and somewhat dizzy, King was hurried off into the narrow mountain path, closely surrounded by the five men.

The silent, cautious march down the valley, through the gap and along the ridge carried them far into the night. This much he knew—they were in the hills directly above the northern gates. The vague, black shadow of a lightless house loomed up before them. In a twinkling he was hustled across the road and into a door, then down a flight of stairs, through pitchy darkness, guided by two of the men, a whispered word of advice now and then from the Yankee saving him from perilous stumbles. He was jerked up sharply with a command to stand still. A light flashed suddenly in his face, blinding him for a moment.

Soon he saw that they were in a broad, bare cellar; three men in heavy black beards were in earnest conversation with several of his captors; all were gesticulating fiercely.

His Newport companion enlightened him between puffs of the pipe he was struggling with. "Here's where we say goodby, young fellow. We turn you over to these gents, whoever they are. You go into the village gay with these 'swabs' by the sewer line, I guess." Truxton pricked up his ears. "The old man has had a hole chopped in the sewer here, they tell me, and it's a snap to get into the city. Not very clean or neat, but it gets you there. Well, so long! They're ready, I see. They don't monkey long when they've got a thing to do."

In another moment his guardianship was transferred; he was being hurried across the cellar toward an open doorway. Down a few stone steps he was led by the bearded crew, and then pushed through a hole in what appeared to be a heavy brick wall. He realized at once where he was. The gurgle of running water came up to him. It was the great sewer that ran from the hills through the heart of the city, flushed continuously by a diverted mountain stream that swept down from above.

He did not know how long they traversed the chill sewer. In time, however, the water got deeper; rats began to scurry along the sides of the circle or to swim frantically on in front of the disturbers.

At last the strange journey ended. They came to a niche in the silmy wall. Up into this the men climbed. The man above was cautiously tapping on what appeared to be solid masonry. To King's surprise a section of the wall suddenly opened before them. He was seized from above by strong hands and literally jerked through the hole, up narrow steps and then into a long, dimly lighted room, in the center of which stood a long table.

He was passed on into a small room adjoining. Some one, speaking in English, told him to sit down. The gag was removed from his stiff, inflamed mouth.

"Fetch him some water," said a voice that he was sure he recognized—a high, querulous voice.

"Hello, Spantz!" articulated Truxton, turning to the black bearded, bent figure.

There was an instant of silence. Then Spantz spoke, with a soft laugh: "You will not know so much tomorrow, Herr King. Give him water, man. He cannot talk with a dry throat."

King was pushed out into the larger room, where he was confronted by a crowd of bewhiskered men and snaky eyed women with most intellectual nose glasses. It required but a glance to convince him that the whiskers were false.

For nearly an hour he was probed with questions concerning his business in Edelweiss. Threats followed close upon his unsatisfactory answers, though they were absolutely truthful.

"We'll find a way to make you talk tomorrow, my friend! Starving is not pleasant."

"You would not starve me!" he cried. "No. You will have the pleasure of starving yourself," said a thin eyed fellow whom he afterward knew as Peter Brutus.

He was thrown back into the little room. To his surprise and gratification the bonds on his wrists were removed.

He found a match in his box and struck it. There was no article of furniture. The floor was bare, the walls green with age. A chimney hole in the ceiling was perhaps the only means by which fresh air could reach this dreary place. Sleep was claiming his senses. He made a pillow of his coat and stretched his weary bones upon the relentless floor.

"No one will ever know," he murmured, his last waking thought being of a dear one at home.

(Continued Saturday.)

CHEAP LAND

Men who are familiar with land values in the Northwest will tell you without a dissenting voice that farm land is better and cheaper in Wallowa county than any place in the Northwest; that there are more and better opportunities for investments in city property in Enterprise and farms in this county than can be had in any other locality on the Coast.

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