The Postmaster at Bible Hill.

BY ROBERT YULEE TOOMBS

From The Cosmopolitan.

CHAPTER VII. (CONCLUDED.)

"If any one present knows any reason why this man and this woman should not be joined together in holy matrimony"—the minister was drawling in perfunctory sing song tones as Thrall entered the parlor where Lawrence and Vina were standing with clasped hands before the clergyman.

"I regret to interrupt this interesting ceremony," said Thrall, raising his hat to the minister's wife and daughter who stood by as witnesses, and stepping forward with a yellow envelope in his hand, "but I hold here telegraphic orders to arrest Mr Lawrence at the request of one of his wives in—"

With an oath and a bound Lawrence cleared the door and went flying through the town.

"Let me see your telegram," said the minister when his wife had led the sobbing Vina into another room and all had grown calmer.

"I have none," replied Thrall smiling, "but that young man evidently has a bad conscience. Let him go. I only desired to save the young lady."

Lawrence fled to the mountain, where he became lost and perished. A few months later in a narrow gorge a skeleton was found and among the bones were a watch, revolver and other articles bearing his name and which Thrall recognized as having belonging to him.

Vina returned home to her father. Both were grievously disappointed in young Lawrence, but were filled with gratitude to Thrall.

Jack took a half a day off to himself and put in the entire time laughing and hugging himself in wild deep inexpressible delight at the manner in Parson Rakestraw's long-drawn plans for revenge had recoiled upon his own head—and at what was yet to come.

"The old rascal ought to hang. I had intended all along to hang him myself..... Yes! if he will talk right fair and square to me, ... and tell all he knows about Gray's disappearance I'll pull the old villian through."

Realizing his danger Parson Rakestraw after a little talk with Thrall—whose "little talks" were always very convincing it seemed—was as "pottery in the clay makers hands," to quote his own Scriptural words, and readily agreed to go forward with the proposed execution of Henry Crow.

"It's the best bait you can use to catch 'em," said the old traitor. "You'll get 'em all there, Mr Thrall indeed you will. The boys'll all come from far and near; any of 'em will ride two days and nights any time to see a spy hung."

It was true.

At least fifty ragged hairy uncombed uncouth moonshiners were assembled about the "Big Rock" on Lost Creek cove directly after sunrise. The marshals who had been led to the spot by Thrall, secreted behind stones and shrubbery some distance away, were pleased to see that each mountaineer, at Parson Rakestraw's suggestion, left his gun back on the hillside that he might not be hampered perhaps in obtaining a clear view of Crow's leap. Many of the mountain men appeared sleepy and heavy eyed as if they had traveled all night.

Parson Rakestraw and Mr. Crow were late and the moonshine men were becoming hungry for their prey when the old parson was seen coming slowly along the valley with the spy. The latter seemed anxious but came forward at the cries of the assembled men.

"Git up on the rock and make us a speech," cried several.

Crow's speech was a failure. He was terribly nervous and naturally embarrassed as the reader or writer would have been in his place, and his audience soon wearied.

They hissed him fiercely, threw small stones at him and then some one crying "Time's up!" they all took up the cry and insisted on his "jumpin'" at once.

"Take a gun, parson, and make the rascal jump." ..."No, take mine"..."Mine"..."Take mine"..... Every moonshiner was anxious that his gun should become famous by being used on this occasion.

"I will use my own gun," said Parson Rakestraw. "It's the one as I've been telling you about that witch a-putting the spell on." And a moment later covering Crow's exposed white shirt front and standing himself recklessly near the dew wet edge of the narrow towering rock he cried in a loud voice:

"Henry Crow, you mean sneaking spy, you; your time have come—jump!"

"It seems that your parson's gun can call up spirits as well as put them down, men," said Crow, a great light breaking over his face. "Look about you!"

They looked. Their arms were in the hands of the enemy and from a dozen different points levelled repeating rifles in the hands of determined marshals covered them. The remained motionless, leaderless, in abject helpless terror.

"Surrender, men! it's all you can do," said Parson Rakestraw, and these were his last words. He lost his footing on the smooth dew-wet stone and slipped over the brink was lost far in the jagged depths below to be recovered hours later torn, crushed and lifeless.

It was an excellent morning's work.

The illicit whiskey business was completely broken up in the Bible Hill district, where Jack Thrall remains yet as United States Commissioner with very little work to do. Henry Crow spends the summer months with him every year.

Vina married an honest farmer and she and Mamie are now true friends. Mamie is now Mrs. Thrall. Little Caddie was brought up and educated at Henry Crow's expense and is now a sweet intelligent girl with many friends and is dearly loved by all who know her.

[THE END.]

The Situation Becoming Serious.

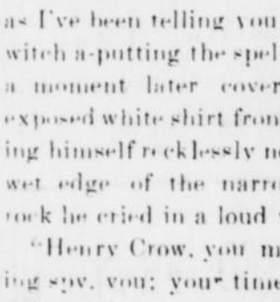
NEW YORK, April 22.—The labor situation on the four great railroads allied under the Reading deal last night resembled a smouldering volcano, and it may break forth at any time. The gravity of the situation is likely to become apparent very soon. The greivances of the men have, up to this time, been confined to the meeting rooms of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and to the organizations of fireman and brakemen. It is charged that steps are already under way to "weed out" the labor organizations. When this is generally attempted it will bring about a struggle. Since the famous Reading strike in Pennsylvania, which resulted in President Corbin and Vice President McLeod utterly uprooting the labor organizarions, there has been little organized labor on the Reading road. It is reported that Mr McLeod, who is president of the Reading said, since the deal, that he would get rid of all labor organizations on the combined roads at any cost. That the Reading's president made use of such a remark is not probable, but his position is so well known that there is no doubt that if there is to be a struggle he would welcome it now. The Jersey Central, Lehigh Valley and Delaware, Lackwanna & Western are all thoroughly organized.

It would be almost impossible to find a locomotive not run by a brotherhood engineer. One of the oldest members of the brotherhood of engeneers talked freely last night. "I extremely desire," said the man, "and so do all the members of our order, to avoid trouble. Yet I do not see how it is to be avoided. There will be one today or tomorrow, but I deem it inevitable."

"Then you really think there is likelihood of a strike?"

"I think it is more than likely. The men are dissatisfied; crew after crew has been laid off, here a passenger crew and there a freight crew, and all because of a combination to cheapen coal. The men do not know what to expect next, and, while they will act with care, they will act fearlessly when they think it necessary."

The republican organ says that "no woolgrower has yet been found who believes that free trade in wool benefits him." We will guarantee to find 100 just such men—men who a few years ago imagined that a tariff on wool benefitted them because they were woolgrowers, but who have not found out differently, and know that it injures them as well as everybody else. Mr Slater will get the votes this year of the Eastern Oregon woolgrowers.—Evening Telegram.



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