

THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

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GRAHAM, N. C., THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1911.

NO. 5

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The Honorable Senator Sagebrush

By **FRANCIS LYNDE**

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CHAPTER II

THE SPOT

In a private dining room in the Inter-mountain hotel, whose entrance portico faces the capitol grounds in the chief city of the Sagebrush State, two men were finishing dinner.

On the guest book of the Inter-mountain one of the men had registered from Chicago. The name was illegible to the cursory eye, but since it was the signature of an empire builder it was sufficiently well known in all the vast region served by the Transcontinental railway system.

The owner of the name had finished his ice and was sitting back to clip the end from a very long and very black cigar. He was a man past middle age, large framed and heavy, with the square, resolute face of a born master of circumstances.

Though he figured only as the first vice president of the Transcontinental company, Hardwick McVickar was really the head of its affairs and the director of its policy.

Across the small round table sat the railway magnate's dinner guest, a man who was more than McVickar's match in big boned, square shouldered physique; a man whose half century was written on his thick grizzled hair and heavy, graying moustache.

"I wish I could convince you that it isn't worth while to hold me at arm's length, senator," McVickar was saying. "You know as well as I do that under the present law in this state we are practically bankrupt. We do a losing business from the moment we cross your state line."

"Yes; it seems to me that I have heard something like that before," was the noncommittal rejoinder.

"You have heard the simple truth, then. And it is a hard truth, but only to the railroad, but to the people it serves. We can't give adequate service when the cost exceeds the earnings."

"And you are unable to convince the members of the railroad commission?" asked the man whom the vice president addressed as "senator."

"You know well enough that we can't convince an anti-railroad commission," was the half angry retort.

"Yet you are still running the railroad," suggested the other.

"Yes; I tuckly the Transcontinental system does not lie wholly within your state boundaries. If it did we might as well surrender our charter and go out of business."

"All of which has come to be a pretty old story," McVickar said the latter quietly. "You didn't make me motor thirty miles to hear you tell it all over again, I know. What do you want?"

"We want a square deal," was the curt reply.

"So do the people of this state," asserted the man across the table. "You lied you, Hardwick—lied us to death while you had the chance. You say justly, it is not legally, to dock to every man in this state who had ever shipped a carload of freight or paid a passenger fare over your line before the present rate law went into effect."

The vice president sat up and put his elbows on the edge of the table.

"You are not saying for me, Blount, and I'm not appreciating at the game either. In all the years we've dickered together you've always been a consistent fighter for your own hand. What's happened to you? Have you acquired a new set of convictions, or are you only a different way of wiping the devil around the stump?"

"Oh, I don't know," returned the guest. "We are all growing older and wiser perhaps. You don't deny the debt you owe us, do you?"

"Do we owe you anything, Blount?" asked the magnate pointedly. "If we do we are willing to pay it in spot cash on demand."

The big man on the other side of the table was leaning back in his chair with his hands in his pockets, and the smile wrinkling at the corners of his eyes was half good, half satirical.

"It's lucky we are alone, McVickar," he said. "A third party might imagine that you are trying to bribe me."

"That's all right, Blount. We understand each other. Nothing for nothing is the accepted rule in this world of ours, and we all recognize it. You are arguing on something, I know you are. Name it. It is anything less than a mortgage on the earth and one or two of the planets I'll get it for you."

"I'm afraid you are more than a mile or two apart yet," said the man who was not smoking after a long minute. "Let's go back to the beginning and start over again. I said that Gordon is going to be the next governor."

"I'm not saying it now," was the sober retort. "You forget that you have just been telling me that you don't intend to comply with the condition."

"What condition?"

"That you turn over a new leaf and meet the people of this state halfway."

"There isn't any halfway point in a fight for the law. You know that as well as I do. But we'll give your son the place gladly."

The man who had once been his own foreman of roundups straightened himself in his chair and smote the table with his fist.

"No, by thunder, you won't—not in a thousand years, McVickar! Maybe you could buy me—maybe you have bought me in times past—but you can't buy that boy! Listen and I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I telegraphed him this afternoon, telling him to throw up his job in Boston, and come out here. If he comes pretty soon he will be legally a citizen of the state before election. You said we didn't have anybody but Rankin to run for attorney general. I'll show you if we haven't."

Mr. Hardwick McVickar was not of those who fight as men beating the wind. What time the deft waiter was clearing the table and serving the small coffees he kept silence, but when the time was fully ripe he said what there was to be said.

"You're speaking of the name of the neck, as usual, Blount," he said. "Name your terms."

"I have named them. Get in line with the new public opinion, and we'll do what we can for you."

McVickar had anticipated the thing Blount was about to happen, not precisely in his next visit to Boston, and in some form which would involve the providing of a place for the senator's son, and he smiled inwardly when he remembered that he had given Gentry, the division traffic manager of the Transcontinental, instructions to look up Mr. Reynolds, a young lawyer.

By all odds it would be better to wait for Gentry's report before taking any decided steps in the bargaining with Evan Blount's father, but unhappily the crisis had arrived, and quite probably it could not be postponed. None less than the vice president tried for the postnomination.

"You're asking a good deal, Blount, and you don't seem to realize it. If we should agree to meet the people of this state halfway, as you suggest, what guaranty have we that you won't be compelled to go all the way?"

The man who was now appearing again at the corners of the hereditarily Blount eyes.

"You can't quite rise to the occasion, can you, Hardwick?" smiled the boss. "You'd like to be good, of course, but you want to be cocksure beforehand that it's not going to hurt you."

"I'm only asking for a little time in which to consider it," was the vice president's final word.

"You have all the time there is between now and election. I've told you what I am going to do."

"You know very well that we can't allow you to do that," said the other. "With an unfriendly attorney general we might as well go out of business first as last."

"It is up to you, McVickar," was the calm reply.

CHAPTER III

A FALSE GALLOP OF MEMORIES

As a churlish fate decreed it turned out that Blount was not to have Gentry for a traveling companion beyond Chicago.

On the second day of westward riding the railroad man, whose business followed him wherever he went, had instructions to meet Mr. Hardwick McVickar, his vice president, in the Illinois metropolis, and on the morning of the following day Blount continued his journey alone.

"Two," four hours later the expatriated westerner had crossed his Rubicon, otherwise the clay colored stream of the Missouri river, at Omaha, and had entered upon scenes which ought to have been familiar—should have been and were not, so many and great were the changes wrought during his fourteen years of absence. In the smoking car he felt into talk with a prosperous looking man whose thin, hawklike face was so out of keeping with the air prosperity—a lone passenger who had boarded the train at Omaha.

At first their conversation was baldly desultory. The hawk faced one, it seemed, was a mine owner whose property, vaguely located somewhere "in the mountains," was involved in litigation. It was the attorney's opinion and laying down plans of procedure for the man who, investing in mines, had apparently purchased more trouble than profit.

Into the cleft thus opened by the ax of business the hawk faced man inserted a wedge of casual inquiry. In addition to his mining properties, he had been making investments in timberlands—bad investments, he feared, since the government had lately taken such a decided stand against the cutting of timber in the new forest reserves.

getting old, Hardwick, and you like to have him with me. Out of that notion grew another. I said to myself this: If McVickar could have a good, clean cut young man representing his railroad, a man who not only knew his business in the courts, but might also know how to plead his client's case before the public—if McVickar could have such a man as that for his corporation counsel and would agree to live somewhere within shouting distance of such a young man's ideals, we might all be persuaded to bury the hatchet and live in peace and amity."

A slow smile spread itself over the strong face of the railway magnate. "Why didn't you say in the beginning that you wanted a place for your boy?"

"I'm not saying it now," was the sober retort. "You forget that you have just been telling me that you don't intend to comply with the condition."

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Blount was on the point of speaking

when he rode past the porch on his way to the northward trail pointed out by the liverman, but a curious feeling restrained him.

He was almost sure that the prosperous looking gentleman with the bird of prey eyes was making him the subject of his earnest talk with the three men of doubtful complexion.

Quite naturally this impression deepened into a conviction when he looked back from the road crossing of the railroad track and saw that all four of the men on the porch were watching him.

After leaving the railroad Blount found himself crossing the broad mesa, with the eastern mountains near at hand, and the Lost River range struck out sharply in its sky line against the sunset horizon.

On this mesa the trail disappeared entirely, but so long as he was sure of the general direction Blount let it go and gave the tireless little broncho a loose rein. Debbelby's ranch lay among the foothills of the distant western range, and he was quite sure that he could ride straight to it in the dark if he needed.

It was some little time after he had left the shoulders of the eastern range behind that a curious thing happened.

Far away to the right he heard the sound of galloping hoofs. The moon was nearly at its full and the treeless landscape was bare of any kind of cover, he could not see the horseman who was evidently passing him and going in the same direction.

At first he thought it was some one who was making a detour to avoid him. Then he smiled at the absurdity of the thought and concluded that he himself was off the trail.

This conclusion was confirmed a little later when two other travelers, announcing themselves to the car as the first one had done and also, like the first, invisible to the sharpest eye sweep of the brown plain, passed him as he sped.

After that he had the solitude and immunities to himself, and it was not until the broad mesa had been crossed and the broncho was picking its way among the hogback hills of the western range that the boyish thing he had been led to do took shape as a venture which might have disastrous consequences, for after the broncho had wandered through many canyons and had climbed a good half score of the hogback hills the young man from the east reluctantly admitted that the boyhood memories were altogether at fault in the deceptive moonlight. He was very thoroughly and painstakingly lost.

By this time Blount was on well re-secured ground. Forty miles away in a direction somewhat east of north lay the Blount home domain, where he had spent his happy boyhood. An hour's gallop to the westward the level sands of the setting sun would be playing upon the little station of Painted Hat, which had been the shipping point for the home ranch. And halfway between Painted-Hat and the Circle Bar lay the horse corral of one Debbelby, a hermit of the mountains and the boy Evan's earliest schoolmaster in the great book of nature.

Since Blount could not go on by train, what was to prevent the taking of an immediate and delightful plunge into the land of heart stirring recollections?

Arranging with the Pullman conductor to have his hand baggage left in Gentry's office at the capital, Blount crossed quickly to a lively stable operator, bargained for a saddle horse, borrowed a poncho and a pair of leggings and presently, with the squeak of the saddle leather making sweet music in his ears, had broken violently, for the moment at least, with all the civilized traditions.

He went off to see Debbelby, drop in upon the old ranchman without warning and thus get his first taste of the homestead unimpaired with any of the disappointing changes which were doubtless awaiting him at the real journey's end.

Now, it chanced that the lively stable was an adjunct to the single hotel in the small sawmill town, and as Blount swung up into the saddle he was a little surprised to see his companion of the Pullman smoking compartment standing on the porch of the hotel in earnest talk with three other men who had been the subject of his figurative either as "timber jacks" or cowboys.

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ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., NEW YORK.

Chapel Hill News.

Cor. of the Gleaner March 5th, 1911.

The varsity and scrub baseball teams lined up for the first practice game of the season Friday afternoon. The scrimmage lasted seven innings and came out 3 to 1 in favor of the varsity. The lineup for the first string was: Lee and Sloan, pitchers; Witherington catcher; Calmes, first base; Hasty, second; Lindsay, short; Edwards, third base; Hackney, center field; Page, left field; McLean, right field.

The prospects are that Carolina will have a fast infield and will be weak on batteries. Clancy has announced his intention to try to develop a team that can win by its hitting and base running, things that he says win the majority of college games.

The first round of the pentagonal debate between Carolina, Virginia, Vanderbilt, Tulane, and Georgia will come off this spring, probably on April 22. The question is the national income tax. Each college will debate both sides of the query. Carolina has the negative against Virginia and the affirmative against her time honored enemy, Georgia. Carolina won from both Georgia and Tulane last spring and from the University of Pennsylvania last fall. A strong crowd has entered for the preliminary contest that will be held this week and the prospects are that Carolina will be able to keep to the high standard that she has established during the last ten years.

The basketball team closed its season with a close game on Virginia's floor Wednesday night. Virginia and everybody interested in the outcome expected Virginia to win by a heavy lead. The score was only 24 to 16. Carolina came back in the second half and scored nine points to Virginia's 8. This was the first basketball team that has ever represented the University and their work is regarded as having been highly successful.

The officers for the Y. M. C. A. have been nominated for next year as follows: J. C. Joekart, president; Fred Drane, vice president; G. E. Norman, secretary; W. D. Barbee, treasurer.

Bishop Robert Strange of the Eastern Diocese of North Carolina spent last Sunday and Monday and Tuesday in Chapel Hill. He preached in Gerrard Hall Sunday night and on the two following days was in the Y. M. C. A. building to receive his friends among the students. His sermon in Gerrard Hall drew a large crowd of students as his sermons always do.

Professor M. C. S. Noble delivered three addresses before the Caldwell Teacher's Association, the teachers and the citizens of Lenoir, March 3 and 4.

A Cold, LaGrippe, then Pneumonia. Is too often the fatal sequence, Foley's Honey and Tar expels the cold, checks the lagrippe and prevents pneumonia. It is a prompt and reliable cough medicine that contains no narcotics. It is as safe for your children as yourself. Sold by all Druggists.

Mr. Jake Rhinehart, of Hickory was made desperately ill by eating crystallized Sassafras extract.

English Spavin Liniment removes all hard, soft or calloused lumps, spavins, curbs, splints, blood spavins, curbs, hollies, sweeney, ringbone, stifles, sprains all swollen throats, coughs, etc. Save \$5.00 by the use of one bottle. Warranted the most wonderful blemish cure known. Sold by Graham Drug Co.

Horace Gregg, an employe of the Champion Fibre Company at Canton was shot and perhaps fatally wounded soon after going to work Tuesday morning, by O. L. Walker a fellow employe. Walker says Gregg jumped on him and he shot in self defence. He is in jail at Waynesville. Gregg was taken to an Asheville hospital for treatment.

Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets are safe, sure and reliable, and have been praised by thousands of women who have been restored to health through their gentle aid and curative properties. Sold by all dealers.

The United States Senate finally yielded to the House in refusing to allow \$90,000 for distribution among attorneys for alleged services for Indians. Marion Butler and associates, it is said, would have received a large part of this amount had the claim been allowed.

Those unsightly pimples and blotches! External applications may partially hide them, but Hollister's Rocky Mountain Tea removes them for keeps. Gets at the cause—impure blood. Tea or Nuggets (tablet form) 35c. at Thompson Drug Co.

Edgar Stripling, former police chief of Danville, Va., arrested for killing W. S. Cornett at Hamilton, Ga., 14 years ago, was placed in jail at Columbus Ga., last week to await the disposition of his case. A strong effort will be made to secure his pardon.

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216-17

Winston Sentinel: Mrs. Hardin Truitt, of Mt. Airy, while on route to Greensboro Sunday to visit her daughter, was stricken with heart failure on the train and died before a physician could be reached. Mrs. Truitt was about 60 years old and had been visiting relatives at Germantown. When she left there Sunday she was enjoying excellent health.

—Ambitious young men and ladies should learn telegraphy, for, since the new 8-hour law became effective there is a shortage of many thousand telegraphers. Positions pay from \$50 to \$70 a month to beginners. The Telegraph Institute of Columbia, S. C. and five other cities is operated under supervision of R. E. Officials and all students are placed when qualified. Write them for particulars.

The Charlotte mint—correctly speaking only an assay office—will do business for another year. The Secretary of the Treasury recommended that the appropriation for its maintenance be discontinued but Senator Overman got the appropriation through the Senate. The House refused to agree to it and the matter hung fire for a time, but, through the strenuous efforts of Congressman Webb and others, the House at last yielded.

English Spavin Liniment removes all hard, soft or calloused lumps, spavins, curbs, splints, blood spavins, curbs, hollies, sweeney, ringbone, stifles, sprains all swollen throats, coughs, etc. Save \$5