

He heard a scream. It was that scream—the agonized cry of the girl—that brought him to his feet while Brokaw was still wiping the hot flow from his dripping jaw. It was that cry that cleared his brain, that called out to him in its despair that he must win—that all was lost for her as well as for himself if he was vanquished. For, more positively than at any other time during the fight, he felt now that defeat would mean death. It had come to him definitely in the savage outcry of joy when he was down. There was to be no mercy from those who were watching. Even in the silence of the Indians he had read an ominous decree. And Brokaw—

He was like a madman as he came toward David again. There was no longer the leer on his face. The grin was gone. There was in his battered and swollen countenance but one emotion. Blood and hurt could not hide it. It blazed like fires in his half closed eyes,—the desire to kill, the passion that quenches itself in the taking of life,—and every fiber in David's brain rose to meet it. He knew that it was no longer a matter of blows on his part—it was like the David of old facing Goliath with his bare hands. Curiously, the thought of Goliath came to him in those flashing moments. Here, too, there must be trickery, something unexpected, a deadly stratagem; and his brain must work out his salvation quickly. Another two or three minutes and it would be over one way or the other.

He made his decision. The tricks of his own art were inadequate, but there was still one hope—one last chance. It was the "knee-break" of the bush-country—a horrible thing, he had thought, when Father Roland had taught it to him.

"Break your opponent's knees," the missionary said, "and you've got him."

The idea had been distasteful to him and he had never practised it. But he knew the method, and he remembered the little missionary's words—"when he's straight facing you, with all your weight, like a cannon-ball!"

Suddenly he shot himself out like that, as Brokaw was about to rush upon him—a hundred and sixty pounds of solid flesh and bone against the joints of Brokaw's knees!

The shock dazed him. There was a sharp pain in his left shoulder, and with that shock and pain he was conscious of a terrible cry as Brokaw crashed over him. He was on his feet when Brokaw was on his knees. And now he struck in—with all the strength in his body he sent his right again and again to the jaw of his enemy. Brokaw reached up and caught him in his huge arms; but that jaw was there, unprotected, and David battered it as he might have broken rock with a hammer. A gasping cry rose out of the giant's throat; his head sank backward; and through a red fury—through blood that spattered up into his face—David continued to strike until the arms relaxed about him, and with a choking gurgle of blood in his throat Brokaw dropped back limply, as if dead.

AND then David looked again beyond the bars. The staring faces had drawn nearer to the cage, bewildered, stupefied, disbelieving, like stone images. For a space it was so quiet that it seemed to him they must hear his panting breath and the choking gurgle that was still in Brokaw's throat. The victor! He flung back his shoulders and held up his head, though he

had a great desire to stagger against one of the bars and rest.

He could see the girl and Hauck. The girl was standing alone now, looking at him. She had seen him; she had seen him beat that giant beast. A great pride rose in his breast and spread in a joyous light over his bloody face. Suddenly he lifted his hand and waved it at her. In a flash she was coming to him. She would have broken her way through the cordon of men; but Hauck stopped her. David had seen Hauck talking swiftly to two of the white men. And now Hauck caught the girl and held her back. David knew that he was dripping red, and he was glad that she came no nearer. Hauck was telling her to go to the house, and David nodded and with a movement of his hand made her understand that she must obey. Not until he saw her going did he pick up his shirt and step out among the men.

Three or four of the whites went to Brokaw. The rest stared at him, still in that amazed silence, as he passed among them. He nodded and smiled at them, as though beating Brokaw had not been such a terrible task, after all. He noticed there was scarcely an expression in the faces of the Indians. And then he found himself face to face with Hauck, and a step or two behind Hauck were the two white men he had talked to so hurriedly. There was a grin in Hauck's face, and a grin in the faces of the other men. To David's astonishment, Hauck thrust out his hand.

"Shake, Raine! I'd have bet a thousand to fifty you were loser, but there wasn't a dollar going your way. A great fight!"

He turned to the other two.

"Take Raine to his room, boys. Help 'im wash up. I've got to see to Brokaw—an' this crowd."

David protested. He was all right. He needed only water and soap, both of which were in his room. But Hauck insisted that it wasn't square—and wouldn't look right—if he didn't have friends as well as Brokaw. Brokaw had forced the affair so suddenly that none of them had had time or thought to speak an encouraging or friendly word before the fight. Langdon and Henry would go with him now.

DAVID walked between the two to the Nest, and entered his room with them. Langdon, a tall man who had looked hatred at him last night, poured water into a big tin basin, while Henry, the smaller man, closed his door. They appeared quite companionable.

"Didn't like you last night," Langdon confessed frankly. "Thought you was one of them damned police running your nose into our business, mebbe."

He stood beside David, with the pail of water in his hand; and as David bent over the basin, Henry was behind him. He had drawn something from his pocket, and was edging up close. As David dipped his hands in the water he looked up into Langdon's face, and he saw there a strange and unexpected change—an expression of deadly malignity. In that moment the object in Henry's hand fell with terrific force on his head, and he crumpled down over the basin. He was conscious of a single agonizing pain, like a hot iron thrust suddenly through him; and then a great and engulfing pit of darkness closed him in.

To be continued next week.

A Railroad On Your Conscience

By OLIN L. LYMAN

HOW would you like to stagger along with a railroad on your conscience? Own it? No, to *use* it, for service it gave you sometime in the sin-swathed past without its knowing it. And any service a railroad renders free of charge, it is safe to assume, is unknown to said railroad.

You take a child with you upon a railroad journey, a very young child that looks younger. You should have paid half fare for said child. You did not, and for years you revel and gloat in secret over having dented a soulless railroad corporation for that much money. Or maybe in the initial royal flush of your youth you were a tramp and hoboed it over earth's green fields between ocean's wave-beat shores. And the railroad was handy and you used it, "unbeknownst." You swung yourself under bumpers with companion cinderfellas; you stowed yourself away with pork barrels or other merchandise. You could never estimate what you owed the railroads for those stolen rides before you became wind-galled and spavined and retired from the road. And for many years you don't care a honking hoot, and in your shady soul you are inclined to be glad of it.

Then there comes a great and abounding difference. Billy Sunday comes to town. There is a wakening, a flood of correspondence. And after many days the bread of the railroad, chuffing along the waters of life, has returned in the convenient form of dough, and the poor struggling corporation is able through the remittances of conscience to keep dubbing along. And the confessed sinner, be he the father of that original child, perhaps now grown to manhood, or be he that hiker of the past who is resting his feet, now walks cheerfully and more erect: for the weight of a whole outraged railroad system is off his conscience.

"Billy Sunday Helps the Railroads"

"BILLY SUNDAY is certainly a help to the railroads," declared one of the most prominent officials of the Erie Railroad when interviewed by the writer.

"We have noticed, particularly in the last two or three years, that if he is holding one of his monster revivals anywhere in the section traversed by our system, we immediately get a big acceleration in the number of conscience letters and remittances. Of course, this is true in result of all religious revivals, since the emotional disturbance engenders a swelling in volume of the 'still small voice,' but it is particularly true of Billy Sunday. There's no doubt whatever that the athletic revivalist has brought to the tills of the big railroads in this country, in this 'conscience money,' amounts totaling many thousands."

All Kinds of Letters

SURPRISINGLY few of the letters are from ignorant and illiterate persons. By far the great bulk of them are well constructed and well spelled, and the handwriting is uniformly good.

Another development is that in many of the letters the fact is revealed that there is a certain selfishness in salvation, a disregard of the welfare of any one in the round world save the writer of the letter. It is an interesting study of the ego rampant through fear, and it regrettably shows a decided yellow streak on the part of the writers. For many of these people do not scruple to get an innocent conductor, who passed them by, "in wrong" by telling the train and the day upon which the incident of wronging the road happened; but in some cases they actually dig up the name of the conductor as an ignorant party to the transaction!

Against this depressing picture can be placed many an instance of a repentant man or woman brooding over the wrong committed till it assumes magnified proportions, and making honest recompense in a spirit of real justice toward the defrauded corporation, and often at the expense of much of real self-sacrifice.

There's a queer diversity in these conscience customs of the country. For instance, the writer was informed by officials of the Erie that most of their "con-

science letters" are unsigned, the writers apparently preferring to hide their darkness under a bushel. In contrast, most of the letters received by the New York Central are signed fully—in some cases with all three names and complete address.

In many cases, however, remitters do not write the roads, but content themselves with calling at some station and handing the amount due to the agent, with or without the name of the repentant refunder being given. The money is then sent in to headquarters. Most of the systems put the proceeds into the earnings of the road in this way: a ticket is purchased to cover the amount, and the revenue thus goes forth with into the passenger traffic earnings of the company.

A specimen of the communications from agents is found in an instance reported by the Central agent at Buffalo. He said that a man called at his office one morning and told of an unpaid trip over the line forty years previously, for which he owed the road a dollar. The agent accepted it and inclosed a ticket to Middleport and return, indorsed "Conscience Fund," to cover the item.

A pathetic letter came to the Central's New York office from a woman in Oregon. She inclosed a post-office money order for \$9.18 to cover fare for her boy many years before from Syracuse, New York, to Chicago. She had suffered since for representing him as younger than he really was, and had learned that the way of the transgressor is hard. She added that there was still more money due, and that she would pay it as soon as she could. "I had to save this money a little at a time," she wrote, "but it does me good to send it to you. My husband feels the same way, as God has saved his soul as well as mine."

As is invariably the custom in these cases, a very cordial and sympathetic letter was written to the woman, urging her to exercise her convenience in regard to the payment of the extra money that she said was due.

A letter came from a man in the South

inclosing fifty cents to pay for a stolen ride in central New York many years before. At the time of sending his first letter he did not give his name, but merely signed the letter, "Your repentant friend."

Then conscience began skirling in his soul again, and he put in a couple of more troubled months. He then wrote the Central that he had been thinking it was not right to withhold his name from the system, so he was giving his cognomen and address. He filled in all three of his names for good measure. The Central replied cordially that the debt was now more than squared, and that he need trouble no more about it.

A father wrote during a recent Billy Sunday revival that, having experienced grace himself, he was now also cleaning house. In this occupation he had found that his son, a minor, had two years before departed from the way set for him. He had traveled over a short distance on a Central side line in that region on a pass that he had borrowed from a Central trainman—and the father took pains to give the trainman's name. The sum that the Central should have had was \$4.24, and this amount the man inclosed, asking the system's forgiveness for his boy.

Such forgiveness was extended without delay. But here's betting that the average reader will in this particular case be extending more sympathy to the trainman than to the father.

Hope for the Railroad's Salvation

MANY of the letters contain expressions from the Bible, and in some cases expressions are encountered of hope that the railroad company, too, may at some future day experience salvation.

One man sent in a remittance of twenty-two cents last year to cover the amount due on a "blind baggage" ride a year or two previously from Rochester to Chili.

The spirit of alevity appears but seldom. A Syracuse man sent in some mileage due for a ride between that city and Utica. He explained that the conductor had overlooked him, and because he was im-