



CHAPTER VI

THE HAPPENINGS DOWN HANCE'S TRAIL. Miss Cullen was sitting on a rock apart from her brother and Hance, as I had asked her to do when I helped her dismount. I went over there and said boldly:

"Miss Cullen, I want those letters." "What letters?" she asked, looking me in the eyes with the most innocent of expressions. She made a mistake to do that, for I knew her innocence was feigned and so didn't put much faith in her face for the rest of the interview.

"And what is more," I said, with a firmness of manner about as genuine as her innocence, "unless you will produce them I shall have to search you."

"Mr. Gordon!" she exclaimed. But she put such surprise and grief and belief into the four syllables that I wanted the earth to swallow me then and there.

"Why, Miss Cullen," I cried, "look at my position. I'm being paid to do certain things, and—"

"But that needn't prevent your being a gentleman," she interrupted. "That made me almost desperate. 'Miss Cullen,' I said hurriedly, 'I'd rather be burned alive than do what I've got to do, but if you won't give me those letters search you I must.'"

"But how can I give you what I haven't?" she cried indignantly, assuming again her innocent expression. "Will you give me your word of honor that those letters are not concealed in your clothes?"

"I will," she said. I was very much taken aback, for it would have been so easy for Miss Cullen to have said that before that I had become convinced she must have them.

"And do you give me your word?" "I do," she affirmed. But she didn't look me in the face as she said it.

I ought to have been satisfied, but I wasn't, for in spite of her denial something forced me still to believe she had

didn't question my opinion. I ordered the stage out and told Toliver to give us a feed before we started. But a more silent meal I never sat down to, and I noticed that Miss Cullen didn't eat anything, while the tragic look on her face was so pathetic as nearly to drive me frantic.

"We started a little after 8 and were clear of the timber before it was too dark to see. At the relay station we waited an hour for the noon, after which it was a clear track. We reached the half way ranch about 11, and while changing the stage horses I roused Mrs. Kist, who succeeded in getting enough of a notion and bread to make two rather decent looking sandwiches. With those and a glass of whisky and water, I went to the stage to find Miss Cullen curled up on the seat asleep, her head resting in her brother's arms.

"She had nearly worried herself to death over 'since you told her that road agents were hung,' Frederic whispered, 'and she's been crying tonight on that she told you, and, although she's worn out with travel and excitement.'"

I removed the cover on the traveling glass and put it with the sandwiches in the left-hand of the stage. "It's a long and a rough ride," I said, "and if she wakes up they may give her a little strength. I only wish I could have saved her the fatigue and anxiety."

"She thought she had to be for father's sake, but she's nearly broken-hearted over it," he continued. I looked at Frederic in the face and said, "I honor her for it," and in that moment he and I became friends.

"Just see how pretty she is!" he said, with evident affection and pride, turning back the flap of the rug in which she was wrapped.

She was breathing gently, and there was just that touch of weariness a sadness in her face that would appeal to any man. It made me gulp, I'm proud to say. And when I was back on my pony, I said to myself, "For her sake, I'll pull the Cullens out of this scrape if it costs me my position."

CHAPTER VII

A CHASER ON HANCE'S TRAIL.

We did not reach Flagstaff till 7, and I told the stagecoach to take possession of their car, while I went to my own. It took me some time to get freshened up, and then I ate my breakfast, for after riding 72 miles in one night even the most heroic purposes have to take the side track. I think, as it was, I proved my devotion pretty well by not going to sleep, since I had been up three nights, with only such naps as I could steal in the saddle, and had ridden over 150 miles to boot. But I couldn't so think of Miss Cullen's anxiety. When I had finished eating, I went into 218.

The party were all in the dining room, but it was a very different looking crowd from the one with which that first breakfast had been eaten, and they all looked at me as I entered as if I were the executioner come for victims.

"Mr. Cullen," I said, "I've been forced to do a lot of things that weren't pleasant, but I don't want to do more than I need. You're not the ordinary kind of a man, and as I presume your address is known, I don't see any need of arresting one of our own directors as yet. All I ask is that you give me your word for the party that none of you will try to leave the country."

"Certainly, Mr. Gordon," he responded. "And I thank you for your great consideration."

"I shall have to report the case to our president, and I suppose to the postmaster general, but I shan't hurry about either. What they will do I can't say. Probably you know how far you can keep them quiet."

"I think the local authorities are all I have to fear, provided time is given me."

"I have dismissed the sheriff and his posse, and I gave them \$100 for their work and three bottles of pretty good whisky I had on my car. Unless they get orders from elsewhere, you will not hear any further from them."

"You must let me reimburse what expense we have put you to, Mr. Gordon. I only wish I could as easily repay your kindness."

"Nothing my head in assent as well as in recognition of his thanks, I continued, "It was my duty as an official of the K. & A. to recover the stolen mail, and I had to do it."

"We understand that," said Mr. Cullen, "and do not for a moment blame you."

"But," I went on, for the first time looking at Madge, "it is not my duty to take part in a contest for control of the K. & A., and I shall therefore act in this case as I should in any other loss of mail."

"And that is?" asked Frederic. "I am about to telegraph for instructions from Washington," I said. "As the G. S. has tied up some of your proxies, they ought not to object if we do the same, and I think I can manage so that Uncle Sam will prevent those proxies from being voted at Ash Forks on Friday."

If a galvanic battery had been applied to the breakfast table, it wouldn't have made a bigger change. Madge clapped her hands in joy. Mr. Cullen said "Ge bless you," with real feeling. Frederic jumped up and slapped me on the shoulder, crying, "Gordon, you're the biggest old trump breathing," while Albert and the captain shook hands with each other in evident jubilation. Only Lord Raltes remained passive.

"Have you breakfasted?" asked Mr. Cullen when the first joy was over. "Yes," I said. "I only stopped in on my way to the station to telegraph."

"May I come with you and see what you say?" cried Fred, jumping up. I nodded, and Miss Cullen said questioningly, "Me too?" making me very happy by the question, for it showed that she would speak to me. In a moment we were all walking toward the platform. Despite Lord Raltes, I felt happy, and especially as I had not dreamed that she would ever forgive me.

I took a telegraph blank, and putting it so that Miss Cullen could see what I said, wrote: "Postmaster General, Washington: 'As the registered letters stolen from No. 3 Overland Missouri Western express on Monday, Oct. 14, loss of which has already been notified you.'"

Then I passed and said: "So far, that's routine, Miss Cullen. Now comes the help for you." And I continued: "The letters may have been tampered with, and I recommend a special agent, Reply Flagstaff, Arizona." RICHARD GORDON, Superintendent K. & A. R. R.



They toasted me as if I had done something heroic.

After consultation with Mr. Cullen, we had 218 and 97 attached to No. 1 when it arrived and started for Ash Forks. He wanted to be on the ground a day in advance, and I could easily be back in Flagstaff before the arrival of the special agent.

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DRETTIES PERSONALITIES.

William N. Chase, the painter, is to paint a portrait of Vice President Hobart.

Mrs. Hetty Green says "women fall so succeeded in business only when they don't mind their own business."

Professor Hiram Corson, professor of English at Cornell, began life as a reporter in the United States senate.

James E. Broderick, chief of the Pennsylvania bureau of mines, began life as a boy in a coal mine at 20 cents a day.

Admiral Sampson has never regained the weight he lost while in Cuban waters. General Ludlow is also in this difficulty.

Mayor Carter Harrison of Chicago is a good yachtswoman. He owns a splendid boat and spends nearly all of his vacations on the water.

Professor Pagenstecher, the famous German oculist, was paid \$10,000 to raise a trip to London and examine the eyes of a great English millionaire.

The late ex-Governor Flower was not a vain man, but liked to see his name in print and so was one of the easiest men in the country to interview.

Julian Stary, the artist, and his wife, Emma Stary, are both devotees of golf, which they play every day during the season when the weather permits any outdoor life.

Charles Broadway Rous, the blind millionaire, is not in favor of speculation or stock jobbing. "The best way to get along," he says, "is to stick to your regular line of work."

Henry Clews, in talking to some young men on the best way to amass wealth, advised simply adherence to the Biblical command to do with all our might whatever our hands find to do.

Cornelius Van derbilt was once a constant smoker, but of late years has had to give up tobacco. "I find," he says, "that anyone can learn to do without it. It is at once the most expensive and the most unnecessary of habits."

Seth Low says the best political advertisement he ever had was the publication of the announcement that he had refused to give money to help along his campaign. "That," says Mr. Low, "is what elected me mayor of Brooklyn."

Roswell Boardley was appointed postmaster of North Lansing, Tompkins county, N. Y., June 28, 1828, and has held the position ever since. In all his 71 years of service no complaint has ever been made against him nor has the slightest error been found in his accounts.

THE TROTTING CIRCUIT.

William Walla-e Scribner, 2:06 3/4, is going without loppies. The Mack pacer stallion Loupe, 2:06 3/4, by John Sevenoaks, is in training in Honolulu, H. I.

The half mile track on the old Howard farm, in the outskirts of Buffalo, is being reconstructed into a mile course.

William Simpson expects to start the grey colt Carbine, by Hummer, out of Cora S, 2:25 1/2, by Harold, in the New England Futurity.

A statistician figures out that since the Speisway in New York has been completed \$250,000 has been spent for horses to drive thereon.

Robert Steel, owner of Cedar Park farm, Philadelphia, announces that he will retire from the light harness horse breeding business altogether.

Azote, 2:04 1/2, is the fastest trotter by the records sold at auction. William Penn, 2:07 1/2, is the fastest trotting stallion ever offered at auction.

Superintendent Covey of Palo Alto farm says that one of his hardest tasks is to find names for the 100 trotting bred foals and 50 thoroughbreds bred annually at the farm.

Timed by H. M. Hanna, Frank W. Covey and Colonel Henry Exall, Askey, 2:08 1/2, the Kansas stallion, recently stepped a quarter at the Glenville track, Cleveland, in 29 2/5 seconds, a 1:57 1/2 gait.

Of the 12 state events opened for the Rigby meeting, all but three filled. The three were the 2:12 trot, free for all stallion trot, and free for all stallion pace. The entries for the nine classes aggregate 168.—Horseman.

APHORISMS.

Beware of him who hates the laugh of a child.—Lavater. Interest makes some people blind and others quick sighted. The misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen.—Lowell. The use of money is all the advantage there is in having it.—Franklin. Knowledge can never take the wonder out of God's world.—George A. Smith. Kindness is wisdom; there is none in life but needs it and may learn.—Bailley. 'Tis hard to school the heart to be, in spite of injury and envy, generous still.—Ellison. A man cannot leave a better legacy to the world than a well educated family.—Thomas Scott. It is a great evil as well as a misfortune to be unable to utter a prompt and decided no.—C. Simmons. It is not wealth nor ancestry, but honorable conduct and noble disposition that make men great.—Ovid.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The human voice can in a few cases utter 296 words a minute. The world's herring catch every year is 390,000 tons, which is all consumed before the next season. A New York criminal, 65 years of age, was brought into court on a litter to receive his 18 months' sentence for manslaughter. Many even poor Chinese, says The Celestial Empire, spend from 20 to 35 per cent of their income in idol worship, which practically eats away their capital.

The U.S. Triple Current Separator. Just as Recommended. COLUMBIA FALLS, ME., April 24, 1896. I am perfectly satisfied with the Improved U. S. Separator. It has proven to be just as recommended. Am thoroughly convinced that I am getting more cream from the same number of cows, hence can make more butter. G. B. GRANT. The Best Separator on the Market. WEST HAVEN, Vt., April 24, 1896. I have used a No. 4 Improved U. S. Separator two years and I have found it to run easy and do good work. After two years' use less than one-half the weight of the handle will start the bowl. I consider the U. S. the best separator on the market, and cheerfully recommend it to any one wanting a first-class separator. Write for illustrated catalogue with full particulars and hundreds of testimonials like the above. VERMONT FARM MACHINE CO., Bellows Falls, Vt. G. A. FITCHBROOK.

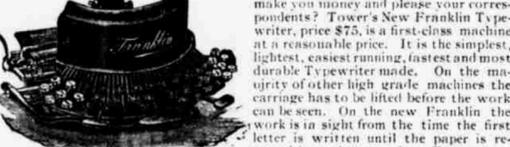
Having a few instruments left from our special sale we have decided, rather than ship them all away, to extend an opportunity for 10 days to any who are looking for a

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They will be left in charge of our agent, Geo. L. Clark who will be pleased to quote you the lowest prices and easy terms, at his warerooms on Derby Street. Please call on him.

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Age three to eight years, prettily trimmed. Some of them made with collar and shields, trimmed with colored inlaid cloth and soutache braid. Also several lines of

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Some have vests and collars of a different color, which give the garments a natty appearance. A new line of Ladies

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Miss Cullen was sitting on a rock.

them, and, looking back now, I think it was her manner. I stood reflecting for a minute and then said, "Please stay where you are for a moment." Leaving her, I went over to Fred.

"Mr. Cullen," I said, "Miss Cullen, rather than be searched, has acknowledged that she has the letters and says that if we men will go into the hut she'll get them for me."

He rose at once. "I told my father not to drag her in," he muttered sadly. "I don't care about myself, Mr. Gordon, but can't you keep her out of it? She's as innocent of any real wrong as the day she was born."

"I'll do everything in my power," I promised. Then he and Hance went to the cabin, and I walked back to the culprit.

"Miss Cullen," I said gravely, "you have those letters and must give them to me."

"But I told you"—she began. To spare her a second untruth I interrupted her by saying, "I trapped your brother into acknowledging that you have them."

"You must have misunderstood him," she said calmly, "or else he didn't know that the arrangement was changed."

Her steadiness rather shook my conviction, but I said, "You must give me those letters or I must search you."

"You never would!" she cried, rising and looking me in the face. On impulse I tried a big bluff. I took hold of the lapel of her waist, intending to undo one button. I let go in fright when I found there was no button—only an awful complication of hooks or some other feminine method for keeping things together—and I grew red and trembled, thinking what might have happened had I, by bad luck, made anything come undone. If Miss Cullen had been noticing me, she would have seen a terribly scared man.

But she wasn't, luckily, for the moment my hand touched her, and before she could realize that I snatched it away, she collapsed on the rock and burst into tears. "Oh, oh!" she sobbed. "I begged papa not to, but he insisted they were safest with me. I'll give them to you if you'll only go away and not"—Her tears made her inarticulate, and, without waiting for more, I ran into the hut, feeling as near like a murderer as a guiltless man could.

Lord Raltes was swearing over his trousers by this time, and was offering the cowboy and Hance money to recover them. When they told him this was impossible, he tried to get them to sell or hire a pair, but they didn't like the idea of riding into camp minus those essentials any better than he did. While I waited they settled the difficulty by stripping a blanket round him, and by splitting it up the middle and using plenty of cord, they rigged him out after a fashion, but I think if he could have seen himself he would have waited till it was dark enough to creep into camp unnoticed.

Before long Miss Cullen called, and when I went to her she handed me, without a word, three letters. As she



I told the sheriff that I had recovered the lost property.

used their proxies to the G. S. Rather than lose the fight we arranged to learn when those proxies were mailed—that was what kept me behind—and then to hold up the train that carried them."

"Was it worth the risk?" I asked. "If we had succeeded, yes. My father had put more than was safe into Missouri Western and into California Central. The G. S. wants control to end the traffic agreements, and that means bankruptcy to my father."

I nodded, seeing it all as clear as day and hardly blaming the Cullens for what they had done, for any one who has had dealings with the G. S. is driven to pretty desperate methods to keep from being crushed. And when one is fighting an antagonist that won't regard the law, or rather one that, through control of legislatures and judges, makes the law suit its needs, the temptation is strong to use the same weapons oneself.

"The toughest part of it is," Fred went on, "that we thought we had the whole thing 'hands down,' and that was what made my father go in so deep. Only the death of one of the M. W. directors, who held 8,000 shares of K. and A., got us in this hole, for the G. S. put up a relative to contest the will, and so delayed the obtaining of letters of administration, blocking his executors from giving a proxy. It was as mean a trick as ever was played."

"The G. S. is a tough customer to fight," I said, and I asked, "Why didn't you burn the letters?" really wishing they had done so.

"We feared duplicate proxies might get through in time and thought that by keeping these we might cook up a question as to which were legal, and then by injunction prevent the use of either."

"And those Englishmen," I asked, "are they real?" "Oh, certainly," he said. "They were visiting my brother and thought the whole thing great larks." Then he told me how the thing had been done. They had sent Miss Cullen to my car so as to get me out of the way, though she hadn't known it. Then he and his brother got on the train at the last stop, with the guns and masks, and concealed themselves on the platform of the mail car. Here they had been joined by the Britishers at the right moment, the disguises assumed, and the train held up, as already told. Of course the dynamite cartridge was only a blind, and the letters had been thrown about the car merely to confuse the clerk. Then, while Frederic Cullen, with the letters, had stolen back to the car the two Englishmen had crept back to where they had stood. Here, as had been arranged, they opened fire, which Albert Cullen duly returned, and then joined them. "I don't see now how you spotted us," Frederic ended.

I told him, and his disgust was amusing to see. "Going to Oxford may be all right for the classics," he growled, "but it's destructive to grumptions."

We rode into camp a pretty gloomy crowd, and those of the party waiting for us there were not much better. But when Lord Raltes dismounted and showed up in his substitute for trousers there was a general shout of laughter. Even Miss Cullen had to laugh for a moment. And as his lordship bolted for his tent I said to myself, "Honors are even."

I told the sheriff that I had recovered the lost property, but did not think any arrests necessary as yet. And as he was the agent of the K. & A. at Flagstaff he