The Democratic Advocate.

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THE NEW STORE. **BABYLON & LIPPY CO.** THE NEW STORE.

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 12th, THE CITIES OF ITALY.

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Those who have attended this course as given in Baltimore and elsewhere, say that they are equal to Stoddard's Lectures.

dec 16 tf

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

This is to give notice that the subscribers have obtained from the Orphans' Court of Carroll county, in Maryland, letters of administration on the Personal Estate of

CHARLES J. HATFIELD,

ate of Carroll county, deceased. All persons having claims against the deceased are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the vouchers thereof legally authenticated, to the subscribers, on or before the 23rd day of July, 1906; they may otherwise by law be excluded from all benefit of said estate.

Given under our hands this 18th day of December, 1906.

MARGARET A. HATFIELD,
THOMAS H. HATFIELD,
dec23 4t Administrators.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

This is to give notice that the subscriber has obtained from the Orphans' Court of Carroll county, in Maryland, letters testamentary on the Personal Estate of

SARAH A. N. WATERS.

late of Carroll county, deceased. All persons having claims against the deceased are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the vouchers thereof legally authenticated, to the subscriber, on or before the 23d day of July, 1906; they may otherwise by law be excluded from all benefit of said estate.

Given under my hand this 19th day of December, 1905.

DR. S. R. WATERS,
dec 23 4t Executor.

COMMISSIONERS' NOTICE.

The County Commissioners of Carroll county will meet at their office, in Westminster, every MONDAY in JANUARY, 1906, for the transaction of business. By order,

FRANCIS L. HANN,
dec30 Clerk.

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nov4 ts C & P Phone Westminster, Md.

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Select Story.

THE TEPPENPAW PRICE.

Francis Lynde in the Cosmopolitan.

It was fully three o'clock in the afternoon of the day of the County Convention before Teppenpaw got away from the Trego Hotel and the dinner tendered him by the leading members of his party.

Time was when it would never have occurred to a Greene County constituency to dine a candidate for the Legislature; but the world moves, even in the solid South. To be sure, the banquet in this instance was no more than a shirt-sleeved gathering about Tarkins' longest table in the bare diningroom of the tavern, with Tarkins' roast pork, boiled cabbage and the other hearty comestibles of a farmer's midday meal for the viands. But its significance remains.

The idea originated in the fertile brain of Jake Layne, one of the party stand-bys. Teppenpaw was a dark horse. His name had been sprung upon the Convention at the last moment, when it had become evident that Luttrell and his miner delegates would bolt if either Carmody or Bullick—both lukewarm in the cause of organized labor—became the party candidate. Some one had suggested Teppenpaw as a compromise. Luttrell had demurred. One of the issues of the campaign was the proposed repeal of the State law authorizing the sale of convict labor to the highest bidder: how did Teppenpaw stand on this?

A miner from the Luttrell faction had been keputed to take the young farmer aside for probing purposes, and Teppenpaw, knowing nothing of the log-rolling, or of the mention of his name in connection with the candidacy, had answered unguardedly. He though it would be well to repeal a law which held the threat of convict competition over the heads of free men in the coal mines, and said so. Whereupon Luttrell had swung his contingent into line, and the nomination was made and carried before Teppenpaw fully understood what was happening. After the adjournment, Layne and some others thought it might be well to examine their hastily chosen compromise specimen under the party microscope. Hence the dinner at Tarkins'.

"I reckon ye wasn't lookin' for this when ye drove over from the Third District this mornin', was ye, John?" said Layne, when the steel knives and forks were fairly in play over Tarkins' red-checked tablecloth.

"No," said Teppenpaw soberly. "And if you pushers had given me half a chance to say what I wanted to, it 'd never 've come to a vote on my name this side o' kingdom come."

"Listen at him!" laughed Triggs, another of the party wheel-horses. "Ye ortn't to be so bashful, John. They ain't nobody goin' to bite ye up yonder at the capital."

Teppenpaw looked down the length of the table and braced himself resolutely for what he had to do. He was a strong-limbed, square-shouldered young fellow, with steel-gray eyes and the reticent, immobile face of the mountaineer stock. From a sheer sense of duty he had attended his district convention the night before; and being appointed a delegate to the county gathering, he had been present to answer to his name. Farther into politics he would have said that oxen could not have drawn him.

"I reckon it's a heap too late now to make the kick that would have kept you all from shovin' me to the front the way you did," he began gravely; "but it ain't too late to tell you what you've run up against. I'm no politician, I don't even know as I'm what you'd call a good Democrat. If it came to a question of what I believed to be right against the party, I'd bolt in aminute."

"But that isn't all," Teppenpaw went on, doggedly. "I ain't the first little bit in sympathy with the way things are done in politics. For instance—as a candidate, I don't allow to contribute a dollar to the campaign fund; and you all know I've given as free as I could afford to in the past."

"Well, that's all right, too," said the two hundred pounds of approval at the farther end of the table. "What's next?"

"Next is something that'll cost me every third vote in the county, I reckon," said the dark horse, bracing himself a little more stiffly. "I ain't going to lose a month's time ridin' all over this county beggin' for votes."

This was a body-blow at custom—the time-honored Southern custom which decrees that a candidate shall do much of his own electioneering.

"I reckon ye'll jest about have to do that, John," objected Layne, breaking the knife-and-fork silence that followed Teppenpaw's declaration.

"No," said honest John, sturdily. "And there's yet one more thing: if I'm elected, I go to the capital without havin' any strings tied to me. I make no swaps or bargains or promises beforehand."

Slawson, the county prosecuting attorney, looked up from his plate.

"Seems to me you might have told us some of these things over yonder in the court-room, Mr. Teppenpaw."

"You can't any of you say I didn't try to," asserted the candidate. "But you all turned in and hollered me down. Now I reckon you've got to make the best of it and take the chances."

Biglow, the town wag, passed his cup for more of Tarkins' chicory coffee.

"Lucky for us there ain't a-goin' to be any chances to take," he laughed. "The Green County Democracy could elect a wooden Indian, if it had a mind to. What I'm worryin' most about is what John'll do when some o' them lobbyists up yonder at the capital flashes a roll on him."

It was a joke, and Teppenpaw joined in the laugh. But when it came his turn again, he said, "That's all right amongst friends, Josh; but it's a place where an honest man might be pretty thin-skinned."

"Shucks!" said a young farmer from Teppenpaw's own neighborhood, "that ain't nothin' to get mad about. They all do it. Every man's got his price, nowadays."

Teppenpaw turned on him quickly. "When you hear a man say that, you know toler'ble well where to find him, Hank."

The table applauded the hit, and the youngling laughed good-naturedly.

"Oh, I ain't got any wings sproutin'," he confessed. "I own up right now that it'd be the size of the pile that 'd catch me."

"Wouldn't have to be high 'at y'u couldn't see oveh the top of it, neither, would it, Hank?" drawled Layne.

"I wouldn't ask for any more'n I could tote away," said the potential grafter; and again the tolerant laugh was all but unanimous.

Teppenpaw pushed back his chair. It was growing late, and he had twelve miles to drive over a bad road.

"Well, gentlemen, I've got to go," he said, in apology. "But I'll leave you something to chew on. Ain't it just such jokin' as this that makes it so doggoned easy for the thieves? I believe it is; and if, instead o' laughin' at it, we'd set out to make it hotter than summer-time for the bribe-takers——"

Biglow's great laugh cut him short.

"Can we do you that-away, John, when you come back?"

"You can, for a fact, if there's any dirty money in my clothes," was the emphatic rejoinder. "And what's more, if you don't do it, you'll be parties to the crime, ever' last one of you."

There was a good, hearty silence at the long table after Teppenpaw went out, and it was the county attorney who broke it.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "you see what we've got before us. As Biglow says, it's lucky that Green is pretty solid. If the Republicans only knew what they haven't got to buck against, they'd make the fight of their lives."

This was the general feeling; but notwithstanding Teppenpaw's apparent coldness, the campaign progressed smoothly for the dominant party through the weeks that followed. True to his promise, the candidate took no active part, would do no personal electioneering, and was deaf to the solicitations of the various committees deputed to "see" or sound him touching his opinions on the issues.

By consequence, he ran considerably behind his ticket at the polls; but as Biglow had prophesied, he was safely elected. A Democrat who was known to be a Democrat could scarcely be beaten in Green; and there were not a few who voted enthusiastically for the man who, barley knowing his alphabet at fourteen, had fought his way successfully through a country college, and whose well-tilled farm on the Drinkwater road was the envy of his neighbors.

The General Assembly met the second Tuesday in January, and Teppenpaw went a day ahead of time to avoid any possible political send-off at the Trego railroad station. His wife drove him to town in the farm-wagon, with their ten-year-old boy for company on her return; and the twelve miles over the frozen road were measured in the chill winter dawn.

Happily, the branch accommodation-train was on time, and Teppenpaw drove down to the water-tank to meet it. In all his married life he had never been away from home for more than a night at a time.

"Take good care of your mammy, Tom," he said, kissing the boy. "And, Molly, don't you try to do too much. When the mulley cow comes fresh, get Sam Bridger to help you with the milking; she's mighty ornery with a new calf around. And write every time you get a chance, little woman. I reckon I'll be right lonesome. Good-by."

He swung up to the platform of the moving car, and his last home glimpse was of little Tom, manfully geeing the team into the Drinkwater road.

In spite of, or perhaps by reason of, his country college education, John Teppenpaw found himself very much alone when the through train dumped him in the crowded station of the capital. One reason for the early-morning start from Trego was the promise of an early-afternoon arrival in the city. But a wrecked freight-train had intervened, and it was late supper-time when he reached the Jackson House, the great hotel on the corner below the Capitol grounds.

He had not intended going to the hotel. Jeffersonian simplicity was his ideal, and a quiet boarding-house for the servant of the people squared best with it. But it was too late to look for anything more than supper and a refuge for the night, so the hospitable swing-doors of the Jackson engulfed him.

There was bedazzlement for country eyes in the thronged and brightly lighted lobby. When he had written his name in the thick guest-book, the clerk's cordial greeting was like the armth of an open fire on a chilly night.

"Glad to have you with us, Mr. Teppenpaw. The Jackson is like an omnibus—always room for one more. How did you leave things down in good old Green?"

"Why—all right, I reckon," said John, wondering. He thought he knew nearly every family in the home valley, and the clerk's face was not familiar. "You from Greene?"

"Oh, no," with a continuation of the professional smile; "I'm from down Columbia way. But, of course, I knew you must be Mr. Teppenpaw of Green County."

Teppenpaw followed a brass-buttoned black boy through the caucusing crowd to the elevator, still clinging to his hand-bag with rural pertinacity. Left alone in the comfortable steam-heated room on the third floor, the member from Greene looked about him, and the vision of the simple boarding-house began to fade. It would probably cut deeply into the legislative stipened to stay on at the hotel, and he had made a mental resolve to carry at least half of the five dollars a day home with him. But perhaps someting was due to the dignity of his office.

After he had freshened himself in the luxurious bath-room, he went out to wander through thickly carpeted corridors and down short flights of stairs until he found the dining-room. Here the magnificence, the French menu card and the deft and respectful service threatened to take his appetite. It was not much like Tarkins', at Trego; no more than he, John Teppenpaw, was like the well-groomed, shrewd-eyed gentleman, in trim business clothes and irreproachable linen, who sat opposite.

It was not etiquette at Tarkins' to make talk with strangers at table, so John held his peace. But the gentleman opposite was inclined to be neighborly.

"Come over to attend the session?" he queried, after a decent interval.

"Yes; I'm the member from Greene," said John absently. He was frowning over the unintelligible menu card, and the waiter was growing decorously impatient.

"Permit me," interrupted his table-mate, reaching across for the card. "I'll order for two, if you like. It'll make it seem a little more homelike."

John resigned the French with a sigh of relief and the feeling that he had found a friend. Thenceforth the elaborate dinner was robbed of its most formidable features. The neighborly gentleman talked easily, and what was more remarkable, he, or the home sickness, made Teppenpaw talk; so that by the time the little coffees were served the casual had become the intimately personal.

As they left the table and the dining-room together, the new acquaintance said: "I suppose you will want to go down and do a little log-rolling with the others before bedtime. I saw they were hard at it as I came through the lobby."

"No," said John, definitely. "Not having any axes of my own to grind, I'm let out of turning the stone for somebody else."

"Good. Then let's get a cigar and sit down and look on—unless you have something better to do."

John had not, and he was glad to postpone a possible return of the isolated feeling. As they were passing the clerk's counter, his companion said something in a low tone to the smiling personage behind it, and the reply was instant and suave.

"Of course: Mr. Teppenpaw, let me introduce Mr. Fanning, president of the Southern Implement Company."

John's slow smile lightened his grave face when he shook hands with Fanning.

"Seems sort o' stiff and belated, after we've been jawing one another across the table for the last half-hour doesn't it?"

"Yes, the social forms are pretty mechanical, when you come to think of it." Then, genially: "Shall we find a comfortable corner and sit a while? I'm interested in what you've been telling me about your farming methods. It's in my line, you know."

The corner and two unoccupied chairs were found, and at the end of an hour Teppenpaw had told the manufacturer all about himself: his farming, his ambition to own the best land, the best cattle, the best homestead in Greene county. Lastly he spoke of the chance which had flung him into politics, laughing quietly and calling himself a happen-so.

"I'm sure your fellow citizens couldn't have made a better choice," was Fanning's commentary on this last. "You are a man of high ideals and the good Lord knows we need such men in politics nowadays."

"Oh, I don't know about the ideals," said John, bluntly. "I just know I'm going to stand for what I think is right."

"That is all the best man in the world could do," was the reply. Then the manufacturer smoked in silence for a full minute before he said, "How is the feeling over in your county about the repeal of the convict contract law, Mr. Teppenpaw?"

"Why, I don't know what the feeling is, generally"—John had quite forgotten the crucial question put to him by Luttrell's striker in the pandemoniac moment of the County Convention, and his answer thereto. "We're farmers, most of us, and it doesn't touch us. But for myself, I think it ought to be repealed."

"Why?"

"Well, on general principles, I reckon. It doesn't seem right to make free labor mix up man to man with criminals."

"That is never done," was the quick response. "The convict labor is sold to the highest bidder, who takes it all, or all he can use of it, and employs no other."

"Yes; but that throws just that many free men out of a job."

"My dear sir! That shows just how little you've gone into the thing. Granted that the convicts take the place of free labor to a very limited extent, isn't it better to have them earn their own living than to make them a charge on free labor by keeping them in idleness?"

"I don't know but it is; as you say, I haven't gone into it very much. But there's another point one of the newspapers made. This convict labor is always cheap. That lets whoever contracts for it undersell other people. Doesn't that get back at free labor another way?"

"Nonsense!" said Fanning; "mere partisan shelling of the woods, Mr. Teppenpaw. Under the present law the convicts are a source of revenue to the State, and they are provided with useful, healthful employment—which is little less than a Godsend to the poor devils. You think it over before you make up your mind to work for the repeal."

The member for Greene said he would, and parted cordially from the man of business when the latter said he must go home. "Hunt me up again, Mr. Fanning," he said, at the hand-shaking. "I reckon I need jogging up a little on some o' these bigger things."

Since this was the Sunday evening, and the Assembly would not convene until Tuesday, there was a clear day in which Teppenpaw might have looked for the simple, Jeffersonian boarding-house. But on the Monday he was otherwise and far more pleasantly employed. Early in the forenoon, the president of the Southern Implement Company turned up at the hotel with a team that made John's horse-loving eyes water, and the entire day was spent in Fanning's company.

Afterward, there was even less time for house-hunting. When the work of the session began, Teppenpaw applied himself like a school boy to his task, determined to understand the intricacies of each separate measure before voting upon it. In the House they called him the silent member for Greene, and made sport of him; but he took it good natured and only grubbed the harder in the field of legal phrasings.

In these bill studies, Fanning proved himself a friend in need. Before the session was a fortnight old, acquaintance had ripened into friendship, and Fanning generously put his experience as a man of the wider world at Teppenpaw's disposal. In a very few days Greene county had shrunk to its proper inconsequent proportions on the State map and John was freely owning himself a jay, with everything to learn.

Long afterward, he remembered that these educational talks often turned upon the beneficence of the convict labor law, and he was then able to trace his change of opinion regarding it step by step. But at the time he would have said that there was no change; that he was merely getting a broader point of view. Indeed, he was growing broader and more lenient in every way, as witness an admission made to Fanning one evening over the tete-a-tete dinner in the Jackson cafe which had come to be a frequent thing with them.

"There's another thing I've got onto since I came here, Mr. Fanning. Politics ain't as black as they're painted in the newspapers. I've been here three weeks, now, right in the thick of it, and I've got to have the first man make a break at me to influence my vote."

The expression on the president's face was hard to read. But what he said was:

"You're quite right about that. Of course, where no question of right and wrong is involved, a man may very properly serve his friends. Don't you think so?"

John was not of two minds on this point.

"He's a mighty no-account sort of man who won't stand by his friends," he declared.

There was more talk of the same sort before the dinner was over, and Teppenpaw went to bed that night warm with loyalty for the man who was proving himself so friendly toward the jay.

It was over a similar little dinner, one evening when the six weeks' session was nearing its close, that Teppenpaw found words to thank his benefactor.

"I'd 've had a mighty lonesome time up here for these six weeks if it hadn't been for you, Mr. Fanning," he began, hardly knowing how to put it gratefully enough. "It's grinding me a little to think that I can't pay it back. But if you should ever get as far into the backwoods as old Greene, Molly and all of us 'd be mighty proud to have you make an arm over our table."

"Don't mention it," said the genial host—the little dinners were nearly all of his giving, as were the drives, the theatre-tickets and all the other relaxations. "The pleasure has been more than half mine, I assure you; and I've been sorry a hundred times that Mrs. Fanning's absence has made it impossible for me to offer you better hospitality."

"I'm sort o' glad of that," said honest John. "I reckon I wouldn't cut much of a figure in your house."

"Nonsense!" said the host. "You are making it harder and harder for me to confess. This has been partly a matter of business with me. You belong to a class of men that our company is always trying to get hold of—the educated farmer who knows his business, and the value of improved, up-to-date machinery. Tell me, don't you have three or four months in the winter that you could give to a money-making side-line?"

"Why—yes; I reckon so," said Teppenpaw, wondering what was coming. But he was honest enough to add, "Only I don't know a thing in this world but farming."

"That's exactly what we want you to know," was the prompt rejoinder. "This year we've been trying an experiment, and it works so well that we are arranging to enlarge on it next winter. It is the plan of sending a few picked men—practical farmers like yourself—into the field to sell our implements. It's a success. These men are discounting our best salesmen, two to one. It's a long way ahead, but would you consider a proposal to take a territory for us, say in Texas, next winter?"

If Teppenpaw hesitated, it was purely on the ground of sentiment: he was wondering if he could stand it to leave Molly and the boy. Fanning misunderstood, and flung the money weight into the scale.

"We are paying these 'specials' twelve hundred dollars for the season; but in your case——"

John sat up as suddenly as if the electric light current had been short circuited through his spine. "Twelve hundred dollars!" he gasped. "Why, that's a hundred a month for a year!"

Fanning smiled. "Yes; father more than the farm nets you, isn't it? But we can afford it. And it's a cinch for you. We make good goods—you know that, for you use them—and we can undersell anybody on the market."

Teppenpaw lost the significance of this last remark, being submerged in a sea of tremendous possibilities. There was a mortgage of six hundred dollars on the farm: half of the twelve hundred would lift that, and the other half judiciously invested in registered Jerseys——

"Shall I fill out the agreement?" asked Fanning, taking a blank and a fountain-pen from his pocket.

"I'm just hunting for the right word to tell you want a big thing it is for me, Mr. Fanning. You can call it business, if you want to; but I'm going to call it friendship, as long as I live."

"Call it anything you like," said the president brusquely; "it's a good stroke of business for us. Just sign your name under mine, there—on the bottom line. That's it. Now we'll settle the money part of it," and he took a blank check from another pocket and quickly filled it out to John's order. "There's your first year's salary," he added, tossing him the check.

John's eyes were moist when he said: "You're buryin' me so deep I'll never be able to dig out. I was going to have to renew a mortgage on the place this summer, and I didn't want to. I hope to gracious I'll get a chance, some time, to——"

Fanning put the grateful protest aside with good-natured brusquerie, and passed his cigar-case.

"Now you are one of us, you must let me drive you out to the factory tomorrow and show you our stock," he said. "You can pair with one of your colleagues for the afternoon session."

Teppenpaw had never missed a session before, but he could not refuse the man who had with one stroke of the pen made him independent of Grigsby, the Trego money-leader. So he paired with the Republican member from Gault County, and the inspection trip was made as prefigured. It held a sharp surprise for Teppenpaw. The workmen in the Southern Implement Company's factory were uniformed in shapeless garments of black-and-white stripes, and many of them wore chain leg-fetters.

"Great Moses!—convicts?" he gasped.

"Why, yes," said Fanning. "Haven't I ever spoken of it? I supposed everybody in the State knew that we were the successful bidders. They're ideal workman; no kick on pay-day, no strikes, no trouble of any kind. And we get them at just about half-price. You'll know better what that means when you are out in Texas next winter competing with other factories."

It was possibly no more than a coincidence that on this particular afternoon, while Teppenpaw was learning the alphabet of implement-making, the repeal bill came up for its third reading in the House. But it was certainly unfortunate that a member who was earnestly desirous of doing the right thing should have missed hearing the debate; the more since the business methods of the Southern Implement Company were given an airing.

But Teppenpaw did not hear it; and it was Fanning himself who brought the subject up at the dinner-table that evening.

"By the way, Teppenpaw," he said casually, between the fish and the entrees, "I nearly made the mistake of my life taking you out to the factory this afternoon. The repeal bill was up for discussion, and Burbank tells me we needed every friend we have. As it was, we barely managed to keep it from coming to a vote."

Teppenpaw's eyes grew narrow. "That's so; you are interested in that bill, ain't you?"

Fanning laughed. "Don't say 'you,' say 'we.' You're one of us now, you must remember."

Six weeks earlier John would have shaken himself alive with a jerk. But now the spell of the shrewd eyes was upon him, and he only said, mildly: "So I am; I keep forgetting that. Reckon it's too late for me to get my oar in up yonder?" with a jerk of his thumb in the direction of the Capitol.

Fanning drew a long breath, and his fine white teeth came together with a little snap. "So you'll fight for us, will you? Listen, and I'll tell you what's got to be done."

The low-toned conference over the corner table in the cafe was protracted until the latest of the late diners had come and gone. At its close, Teppenpaw rose and held out his hand to the manufacturer.

"It'll go; as you say, it's got to go. You get Burbank to keep it from coming to a vote too soon—I'm no good at chockin' the wheels—and I'll work on the farmers. Good night."

Two days later—the delay having been purchased for vote-swaying purposes by the most strenuous filibustering on the part of its opponents—the repeal measure was lost by the narrowest possible margin—namely, by one vote.

Representative Teppenpaw found that he had a small war on his hands when he went home after the session; but he fought its opening campaign in the strength of conscious rectitude.

It was Luke Luttrell who precipitated the conflict, and the battle-field was Biggers' store in Trego, with a group of cold-weather stove-huggers for onlookers. Teppenpaw had been home long enough to get the early plowing in train, and he came to town late one afternoon to lay in a supply of groceries. Biggers was filling his order when Luttrell entered.

"Howdy, Luke?" said John, offering to shake hands.

Luttrell backed off with an oath and shoved his hands in his pockets.

"I ain't shakin' hands with no damn' vote sellin' scab!" he retorted; and the men around the stove sat up and took notice.

Teppenpaw came of fighting stock, and the veins in his forehead began to swell.

"That's a toler'ble hard word, Luke. Maybe you wouldn't mind tellin' these gentlemen here what you're a meanin' by it," he said, in his quietest tones.

"——!" said the labor boss, "they all know mighty well; there ain't a man in Trego that don't know."

"I'm in Trego, and I don't know."

"You don't hey? I reckon you done forgot about that promise you made to the Miners' Union in the Convention when you killed that convict labor bill in the Legislatur'. How much did ye git for scabbin' that time?"

There were enough of the stove huggers to spring up and get between and drag them apart, but they could not stop the war of words.

"You're a liar!" panted John. "I made no promise!"

"You did! You told Bill Nevins that it was an outrage to make free men work in competition with criminals. If you hadn't made that promise, you'd never got the nomination this side of ——. I want to know how much you got for sellin' us out!"

Teppenpaw shook himself free of the pacemakers and began to gather up his purchases.

"I don't have to answer any such question as that," he retorted. "Greene County knows me better."

"Does, hey? Well, you'll find out what Greene County knows, next time you want anything. That's all I've got to say."

But Teppenpaw found out earlier. The whisper began when he paid off his mortgage in June, and it became audible even to him when he bought a herd of Jerseys in July and paid cash down. It shook him a little. Distance and time are great clarifiers of the mental and moral atmosphere, and the spell of the strenuous six weeks was no longer upon him. What if——?

He sat down that night and wrote a letter to Fanning. It was a bare question, but its answer would clear the air. When would he be expected to report for duty?

He got the answer one evening at the hands of Biggers, whose store was also the Trego postoffice. It was a cold business letter, breathing finality in every line, and it was signed by the president of the Southern Implement Company in person. Owing to changes in the company's plans, there would be no "specials" sent out during the coming season. But since he—Tappenpaw—was in no wise to blame for this change, he was to consider the twelve hundred dollars advanced as forfeit-money and keep it. The agreement was canceled and the account was written off the books.

Teppenpaw's hands were trembling when he finished reading it, and the soul in him went sick. It was plain enough now—he had been bribed, and it had taken him six months to find it out. All the friendship, all the kindnesses, had had but one object—the hoodwinking of a man with a vote; no, the buying of the man. He crushed the letter in his hand, and the wild blood of his mountaineer forefather spoke in the sobbing oath. It was well for the tempter that he was not within arm's-reach just then.

"What's the matter, John? Somebody dead?" said a voice at his elbow.

It was the young farmer who had once earned a rebuke for asserting that every man has his price. Teppenpaw remembered.

"No; there's nobody dead—not in the way you mean, Hank. But I allow to take back what I said to you over Tarkins' table that day last fall. I reckon every man has got his price, after all."

The young man laughed triumphantly. "What's your'n, John?—or haven't ye found out yet?"

"Yes, I've found out: and you can tell it wherever you go in Greene County, Hank. It's just twelve hundred dollars paid in advance." And he turned abruptly and went out into the night, with the letter still crushed in his hand.

A man recently left his umbrella in the stand in the hall of a provincial hotel with a card bearing the following inscription attached to it: "This umbrella belongs to a man who can deal a blow of 250 pound's weight. He will be back in ten minutes."

On returning to seek his property he found in its place a card thus inscribed: "This card was left here by a man who can run ten miles an hour. He will not be back!"

Mrs. Grundy has been having a bad time of it the last few years, since the advent of cycles and the independence of maidenhood. Girls may have gone too far, and do go too far, sometimes, even now; but they have had their kick for freedom, and are becoming more content to settle down to a quiet trot and a gentle gallop.

Liberty means responsibility, and responsibility tests the man and the race.