

CONCERNING INGOLBY AND TWO TOWNS 27

ever, if he knew that he was being tricked. Then he struck, and struck hard. The war of business was war and not "gollyfoxing," as he said.

Selfish, stubborn and self-centred he was in much, but he had great joy in the natural and sincere, and he had a passionate love of Nature. To him the flat prairie was never ugly. Its very monotony had its own individuality. The Sagalac, even when muddy had its own deep interest, and when it was full of logs drifting down to the saw-mills, for which he had found the money by interesting capitalists in the East, he sniffed the stinging smell of the pines with elation. As the great saws in the mills, for which he had secured the capital, throwing off the spray of mangled wood, hummed and buzzed and sang, his mouth twisted in the droll smile it always wore when he talked with such as Jowett and Osterhaut, whose idiosyncrasies were like a meal to him; as he described it once to some of the big men from the East who had been behind his schemes, yet who cavilled at his ways. He was never diverted from his course by such men, and while he was loyal to those who had backed him, he vowed that he would be independent of these wooden souls in the end. They and the great bankers behind them were for monopoly; he was for organization and for economic prudence. So far they were necessary to all he did; but it was his intention to shake himself free of all monopoly in good time. One or two of his colleagues saw the drift of his policy and would have thrown him over if they could have replaced him by a man as capable, who would, at the time, consent to grow rich on their terms.

They could not understand a man who would stand for a half-hour watching a sunset, or a morning sky dappled with all the colours that shake from a prism; they were suspicious of a business-mind which could gloat over the light falling on snow-peaked mountains, while