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The Taming of Red Butte Western

ean regist bene FRANCIS LYNDE

reat is where you are lame, Flem-ter. You don't know your man. Put t up to Hallock bare handed. If he where he'll wear stripes. That will fetch him. We'll be going in a w minutes. Do you want to meet

wood?" here or with you," said the ner of the Wire Silver, and he turnhis team and was driving away say that the wrecking train was onciced terestative

CHAPTER V.

OR the first few weeks after the change in ownership and the arrival of the new superintendent at Angels a sardonic laugh sard in the land. The Red desgrinned like the famed Cheshire at when an incoming train from the last brought sundry boxes and trunks and to contain the new boss' wardrobe. Its guffaws were long and uproarious when it began to be noised about that the company carpenters and fitters were installing a bath and other civilizing and softening appliances in the alcove opening out of the superintendent's sleeping room in the

adquarters building. Lidgerwood slept in the Crow's Nest not so much from choice as for the eason that there seemed to be no alternative save a room in the town tavera, appropriately named the Ho-

It is a railroad proverb that the properly inoculated railroad man eats and sleeps with his business. Lidgerwood exemplified the saying by having a wire cut into the dispatcher's office, with the terminals on a little table at his bed's head and with a tiny telegraph relay instrument mounted on the stand. Through the relay, tapon the stand. Through the relay, tap-ping softly in the darkness, came the news of the line, and often after the strenuous day was ended Lidgerwood punishment, Lidgerwood lost all he had would lie awake listening.

At the tar paper covered, iron roof-ed Celestial, where he took his meals, Lidgerwood had a table to himself, which he shared at times with Mc-Closkey and at other times with breezy Jack Benson, the young engineer whom Vice President Ford had sent upon Lidgerwood's request and recommendation to put new life into the track force and to make the pre-liminary surveys for a possible west-ern extension of the road.

On the line and in the roundhous and repair shops the nickname "Col-lars and Cuffs" became classical, and were ordered out on the service car. the Irishman wore the highest celluloid collar he could find in Angels. rounding out the clownery with a pair of huge wickerware curs, which had once seen service as the coverings of

a pair of maraschino bottles.

Lidgerwood ignored the jests good naturedly, rather thankful for the playful interlude which gave him a breathing space and time to study the field before the real battle should be

That a battle would have to fought was evident enough. As yet the demoralization had been scarcely checked, and sooner or later the necessary radical reforms would have to begin. Gridley, whose attitude toward the new superintendent continued to be that of a disinterested adviser, as sured Lidgerwood that he was losing nd by not opening the campaign f severity at once.

The fact that the master mechanic was continually urging the warfare made Lidgerwood delay it. Just why Gridley's counsel should have produced such a contrary effect Lidgerwood was sound, and the man who gave it was friendly and apparently ingenuous. But prejudices, like preposeerions, are sometimes as strong as they are inexplicable, and, while Lidger wood freely accused himself of injustices. tice toward the master mechanic, a certain feeling of distrust and repul-sion, dating back to his first impres-

ons of the man. died hard. Oddly enough, on the other hand, there was a prepossession, quite as unreasoning, for Hallock. There was absolutely nothing in the chief clerk to inspire liking or even common busiess confidence. On the contrary, while Hallock attended to his duties and carried out his superior's instructions with the exactness of an automaton his attitude was distinctly atagonistic. As the chief subaltern on Lidgerwood's small staff be was efficient and well nigh invaluable. As a man Lidger-wood felt he might easily be regarded as an enemy whose designs could never be fathomed or prefigured, but under the crabbed and gloomy crust of the man the superintendent fancled he could discover a certain savage loyalty.

But under the loyalty there was a deeper depth-of misery or tragedy, or both and head ? Torogone I injurial fire Questioned by Lidgerwood, McClos-

7 30ciered that thilliers were there ded; that after the first few mooths in Angels his wife a grekingly beautiful.

Angels

save himself, ever entered.
On the Red Butte Western orders, regarded by disciplined railroad men as having the immutability of the laws of the Medes and Persians, were still interpreted as loosely as if they were but the casual processing the casual process. interpreted as loosely as if they were but the casual suggestions of a by-stander. Rules were formulated only to be coolly ignored when they chanced to conflict with some train crew's desire to make up time or to kill it. Directed to account for fuel and oil onsumed, the enginemen good natured of forged reports and the storekeepers plandly O. K'd them. Instructed to keep an accurate record of all material used, the trackmen jocosely scattered more spikes than they drove, made drewood of the stock crossiles and were not above underpinning the sec-tion houses with new dimension tim-

In countless other ways the waste was prodicious and often mysteriously unexplainable. The company supplies had a curious fashion of disappearing in transit. Two carloads of building tumber sent to repair the station at Red Butte vanished somewhere between the Angels shipping yards and their billing destination.

In such a chaotic state of affairs track and train troubles were the rule rather than the exception, and it was a Red Butte Western boast that the fire was never drawn under the wrecking train engine. For the first few weeks Lidgerwood let McCloskey answer the "hurry calls" to the various scenes of disaster, but when three see scenes of disaster, but when three sec-tions of an eastbound cattle special, ignoring the ten minute interval rule. were piled up in the pinon hills he went out and took personal command of the track clearers.

This happened when the joke was at codtide, and the men of the wrecking crew took a ten gallon keg of whisky along wherewith to celebrate the first appearance of the new super-intendent in character as a practical wrecking boss. The outcome was rather astonishing. For one thing, Lidger-wood's first executive act was to knock in the head of the ten gallon celebration with a striking hammer, before it was even spigoted, and for another he quickly proved that he was Gridler's equal, if not his master, in the gentle art of track clearing. Through the long day and the still longer night of toil and stress, the new boss was able to endure hardship with the best man

on the ground. This was excellent, as far as it went.

punishment, Lidgerwood lost all he had gained by being too easy.

"We've got him chasin' his feet," said Tryon, one of the rule breaking engineers, making his report to the roundhouse contingent at the close of the "sweatbox" interview. "It's just as I've been tellin' you mugs all along-he hain't got sand enough to fire any-

One day in Lidgerwood's private of-ace Jack Benson said to him: "What do you know about Fred once, when Brannagan and the 117 himself out here in the desert. Why?

met his mother and sister?" "Well, you ought to. The mother ene of the only two angels in Angels, and the sister is the other. Dawson

"Yes, a man with a past. Over in you's they lump us all together and call us the outlaws."
"Not without reason." said Lidger-

"Not any," asserted Benson, with cheerful pessimism. "The entire Red Butte Western outfit is tarred with the same stick." "I know," said Lidgerwood. "But you were speaking of Dawson, weren't

"Yes, and that's what makes me say what I'm saying. He is one of them, though he needn't be if he weren't such a hopelessly sensitive ass. He's a B. S. in M. E. or he would have been if he had stayed out his senior year in Carnegie, but also he happened to be a football fiend, and in the last intercollegiate game of his last season he had the horrible luck to kill a man, and the man was the o kill a man, and the man was the ther of the girl Dawson was going

"Heavens and earth!" exclaimed Lidgerwood. "Is he that Dawson?"
"The same," said the young engineer laconically. "It was the sheerest accident, and everybody knew it, and according blamed Dawson. I happen to knew, because I was a junior in Caranasia at the time. But Fred took it. negle at the time. But Fred took it hard; let it spoil his life. He threw up everything, left college between two days and came to bury himself out here. For two years he never let his mother and sister know where he was: made remittances to them through a bank in Omaha so they shouldn't be able to trace him. Care to hear any more?"

"Yes: go on." said the superinter "I found him." chuckled Benson. little game off to the harrowed women. Next thing be knew they dropped in on him, and he is just crazy enough to stay here and to keep them here.

for Gridley. Fred's hoss believe it, but he has nerually got the herve to make love to Dawsch's sister And he a widow man, old enough to be her father? Lidgerwood smiled. It is the privilege

of youth to be intolerant of age in its rival. Gridley was, possibly, forty two or three, but Benson was still on the sunny slope of twenty-five "You are prejudiced, Jack," he criticised. "Gridley is still young enough to marry again if he wants to—and to live long enough to spoil his grandchildren."

"But he doesn't begin to be good enough for Faith Dawson." countered the young engineer stubbornly.

"Isn't he? Or is that another bit of your personal grudge? What do you

What do you

Pressed thus sharply against the unyielding fact. Benson was obliged to
confess that he knew nothing at all
against the master mechanic, nothing
that could be pinned down to day and
date. Gridley was well known to be a
hard hitter, and now and then, when
the blows fell rather measurements. the blows fell rather mercilessly, the railroad colony called him a tyrant and hinted that he too, had a past that would not bear inspection. But even Benson admitted that this was mere

"Where do I come in on all this, Jack? You have an ax to grind, I take it," said Lidgerwood, "I have Mrs. Dawson wants me to

take my meals at the house. I'm in-dined to believe that she is a bit shy of Gridley, and maybe she thinks I could do the buffer act. But as a get-between I'd be chiefly conspicuous by my absence."

"Sorry I can't give you an office job," said the superintendent in moci

sympathy.

"So am I, but you can do the next best thing. Get Fred to take you home with him some of these fine evenings, and you'll never go back to the Celestration of the control of th tial, not if you can persuade Mrs. Dawson to feed you. The alternative is to fire Gridley out of his job." This time you are trying to make the tail wag the dog," said Lidger-

wood. "Gridley has twice my back-ing in the P. S. W. board of directors. Besides, he's a good fellow, and if I go up on the mesa and try to stand his off for you it will be only because hope you are a better fellow."

"Prop it up on any leg you like, only go," said Benson simply. "I'll take it as a personal favor and do as much for you some time I suppose I don't have to warn you not to fall in love with Faith Dawson yourself-or, on second thought, perhaps I had better." This time Lidgerwood's laugh was

"No. you don't have to. Jack. You can safely deputize me, I guess."
"All right, and many thanks. Here's 202 coming in, and I'm going over to Navajo on it. Don't wait too long be fore you make up to Dawson. You'll find him well worth while after you've

broken through his shell."

When Lidgerwood began the drawing of the net a new time card was trung with McCloskey's co-operation, and when it went into effect a notice on all bulletin boards announced the adoption of the standard "Book of Rules" and promised penalties in a rising scale for unauthorized departure therefrom.

Promptly the horse laugh died away, and the trouble storm was evoked. Ordevance committees haunted the Crow's Nest, and the insurrection n, starting with the trains and spreading to the track force threatened to involve the telegraph perators—threatened to become a pr worse than this, the service, hapharard enough before, now became a maddening chaos. Orders were mismaderstood, whether willfully or not not count of incurrence of the count of to court of inquiry could determi wrecks, were of almost daily occu ence, and the shop track was speedi illed to the switches with crippled e ines and cars. Anamos I

in the pandemonium of untoward events McCloskey was Lidgerwood's right hand, tolling, smiting, striving and otherwise proving himself a good soldier. But close behind him came Gridley, always suave and good. natured, making no complaints, no ssary by the innumerable wreck grew mountain high, and always coun-seling firmness and more discipline. "Don't give in an inch. Show these

muckers that you mean business, an mean it all the time, and you'll wir

out all right," said he. In the small headquarters staff Hal-From the beginning of hostilities he seemed to have made a pact with himself not to let it he have ock was the only none if not to let it be known by any ac or word of his that he was aware of the suddenly precipitated conflict. The putine duties of a chief cierk's deak ire never light. Hallock's became so exacting that he rarely left his offic intrenched himself and did him

when the fight began Lidgerwood beerved Hallock closely, trying to over if there were any secret signs of the satisfaction which the revolt of the rank and file might be supposed to awaken in an unsuccessful candidate for the official headship of the Red Butte Western. There were none. McCloskey, being of Scottish blood and desert seasoned, was a cool inhter who could take punishment without wincing overmuch. But at the end of the first fortnight of the new time card he cornered his chief in the private office and freed his mind.

"It's no use, Mr Lidgerwood; we can't make these reforms stick with the outfit we've got." he asserted in sharp discouragement. "The next thing on the docket will be a swike. and you know what that will mean in country where the whisky is bed

fixed for trouble."

"I know, Nevertheless the reforms

have got to stick," returned Lidger-wood definitively. "We are going to run this railroad as it should be run or hang it up in the air. Did you discharge that operator at Crow Canyon—the fellow who let train 76 get by him without orders night before last? "Dick Rufford? Oh, yes: I fired him, and he came in on 202 today, lugging a piece of artillery and shooting off his mouth about what he was going to do to me—and to you. I suppose you know that his brother Bart, 'the killer,' they call him, is the 'took-out' at Redlight Sammy's faro game and the meanest devil this side of the

"I didn't know it. but that cuts no figure." Lidgerwood forced bimself to say it, though his lips were curious ly dry. "We are going to have disci pline on this railroad while we stay here. Mac; there are no two ways about that." McCloskey tilted his bat to the

McCloskey tilted his hat to the bridge of his nose, his characteristic gesture of displeasure.

"I promised myself that I wouldn't join the gun toters when I came out here," he said, half musingly, "but I've weakened on that. Testerdny when I was calling Jen Cummings down for dropping that new shifting engine out of an open switch in broad daylight he mulled on me out of his down for dropping that new shifting engine out of an open switch in broad daylight he pulled on me out of his cab window. What I had to take while he had me hands up is more than I'll take from any living man again."

"I wouldn't get dem at the shifting in the employ of this company, and they have sent a committee to me to ask for an investigation, basing the demand on the assertion that they were coerced into giving up their money to the building and loan people."

again."
"I wouldn't get down to the desert level if I were you, Mac." said the

"I'm down there right now, in self defense," was the sober rejoinder.
"And if you'll take a hint from me you'll beel yourself, too, Mr. Lidger

It was an hour or two later in the same day when McCloskey came into the private office again, bat tilted to

nose and the gargoyle face portraying fresh soul agonies. "They've taken to pillaging now!" he ourst out. "The 316, that new saddle tank shifting engine, has disappeared. I saw Broderick using the '95, and when I asked him why he said he couldn't find the '16." "Couldn't find it?" echoed Lidger-

"No, nor I can't either." "Where was it at last accounts?"
"Standing on the coal track under chute No. 3, where the night crew left at midnight or thereabouts." "But certainly somebody must know where it has gone." said Lidgerwood. "Yes, and, by grapples, I think I

thow who that somebody is!" "If I should tell you rou wouldn't believe it, and, besides, I baven't get the proof. But I'm going to get the proof," shaking a menacing foretinger.

and when I do"-The interruption was the entrance of Hallock coming in with the payrolls for the superintendent's approval.

McCloskey broke off short and turned
to the door.

CHAPTER VI.

EVERY MAN'S SHARE. HIS switching engine mystery opens up a field that I've been trying to get into for some little time. Mac." the super-

had elapsed and the trainmaster had returned to the private office. /
"Wastage, you mean?" queried the "That is what I have been calling

it-a reckless disregard for the value of anything and everything that can be included in a requisition. There is a good deal of that, I know. The right of way is littered from end to end with good material thrown aside. But I'm afraid that isn't the worst of it." The trainmaster was nursing a knee and screwing his face into the reflec tive scheme of distortion.

"Those things are always hard to prove. If a company employee wants to steal and there isn't enough com-mon honesty among his fellow employees to hold him down he can steal fast enough and get away with it."
"By littles, yes, but not in quantity." pursued Lidgerwood. "We'll pass up the petty thieveries for the present pursued Lidgerwood. "We'll pass up the petty thieveries for the present and look a little higher. Have you found any trace of those two carloads of company lumber lost in transit between here and Red Butte two weeks ago?"

to the door of communication with the outer office and opened it with a quick found any trace of those two carloads of company lumber lost in transit between here and Red Butte two weeks ago?"

to the door of communication with the outer office and opened it with a quick found any trace of those two carloads. "I thought i heard something." between here and Red Butte two weeks ago?"

nor of the cars themselves. "No. They were reported as two trans-continental flats, initials and numbers plainly given in the car record. They seem to have disappeared with the

"Which means?" queried the sup-"That the numbers or the initials. both, were wrongly reported. It means that it was a put up job to steal the

"Exactly. And there was a mixed carload of lime and cement lost at about the same time, wasn't there?"

Lidgerwood's swing chair righted elf to the perpendicular with a snap. "It is an organized gang, and nust have its members well scattered and have a good many members, too," he said conclusively. "That brings us o the disappearance of the switching engine again. No one man made of with that single handed, Mac."

"Hardly." "I believe we'll get to the bottom of all the looting on this switching engine business. They have overdone it his time. You can't put a locomotive in your pocket and walk off with it.
"But the object, Mr. McCloskey—what possible profit could there be in - . c. or of a lacomotive that can pelthe trainmaster shook his head. "I've stewed over that till I'm threat-ened with softening of the brain," he onfessed.
"Never mind. You have a compa

tively easy joh." Lidgerwood went on.
"That engine is somewhere this side
of the Crosswater hills. Copan hasn't
seen it. It is too big to be hidden under a bushel basket. Find it and
you'll be hot on the trail of the carload robbers."

load robbers."

McCloskey got upon his feet as if he were going at once to begin the search, but Lidgerwood detained him.

"Hold on. I'm not quite through yet. There is another matter. Some years ago there was a building and lean association started in Angels, the ostensible object being to help the railroad fnen to own 'heir homes. As I understand it, the railroad company fathered it, or at all events some of the officials took stock in it. When it died there was a considerable defect, the omcials took stock in it. When it died there was a considerable deact, together with a failure on the part of the executive committee to account for a pretty liberal cash balance."

"Two heard that much," said the

"Then we'll bring it down to date."
LAdgerwood resumed. "It appears that
there are twenty-five or thirty of the

admitted. "The story goes that the by the old Red Butte Western and if a man didn't take stock he got himself disliked. If he did take it the



ms were held out on the payrolls. It smells like a good, old fash-loned graft with the lid nailed on." "My duty is clear." said Lidgerwood. "Of course the Pacific Southwestern company isn't responsible for the side issue schemes of the old Red Butts Western officials. But I want to do

officials of the building and loan company with open dishonesty. There was a balance of several thousand dollars

in the treasury when the explosion came, and it disappeared."
"Well?" said the trainmaster.
"The losers contend that somebody ought to make good to them. They also call attention to the fact that the building and loan treasurer, who was never able satisfactorily to explain the disappearance of the cash balance, in

McCloskey sat up and tilted his derby to the back of his head. "Gridley?" he asked.
"No. For some reasons I wish it ware Gridley. He is able to dent his ewn battles. It comes nearer home.
"Isc. The treasurer was Hallock."
McCloskey rose upiselessly, tiptoed to the door of communication with the

seeper's office to check up the time wells. He won't be back today." McClickey closed the door and returned to his chair.

"If I say what I think you'll be asking me for proofs. Mr. Lidgerwood.
and I have none. Besides. I'm a prejudiced witness. I don't like Hallock."

Quite unconsciously Lidgerwood
picked up a pencil and began scribbling idly on his desk blotter. "I don't
want to do Hallock an injustice." he went on, after a hesitant pause; "nei-ther do I wish to dig up the past for him or for anybody. I was hoping that you might know some of the inside details and so make it easier for me to get at the truth. I can't believe that Hallock was culpably responsible for the disappearance of the money."
"I am not a fair witness," reiterated

McCloskey. "There's been gossip, and I've listened to it." "About this building and loan mess?"

"No; about the wife."
"To Hallock's discredit, you mean?" "You'd think so. There was a scandal of some sort; I don't know what it was-never wanted to know. But there are men here in Angels who hint that

Hallock killed the woman and sunk her bedy in the Timanyoni."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Lidgerwood under his breath. "I can't believe that,

that doller better , who makes

"I don't know that I do, but I can tell you a thing that I do know, Mr. Lid-derwood. Hallock is a devil when it comes to paying a grudge. There was a freight conductor named Jackson that he had a shindy with in Mr. Ferguson's time, and it came to blows. Hallock got the worst of the fist fight, but Ferguson made a joke of it and wouldn't fire Jackson. Hallock bided his time like an Indian and worked it around so that Jackson got promoted

'It was the devil's own game. Jackson was a handsome young fellow, and Hallock set a woman on him—a woman out of Cat Biggs' dance hall. From that to holding out fares to get more money to squander was only a step for the young fool, and he took Having baited the trap and set it. Hallock sprung it. Jackson's got a couple of years to serve yet. I believe."

Lidgerwood was listening thoughtfully. The story which had ended so disastrously for the young conductor threw a rather lurid side light upon Jackson's accuser. Yet the superintendent was just enough to distinguish between gross vindictiveness and an evil which bore no relation to the

to a passenger run. After that it was

vengeful one.

"A financially honest man might still have a weakness for playing even in a personal quarrel," he commented. "Your story proves nothing more than that."

"I know it." "But I am going to run the other thing down, too," Lidgerwood insisted. "Hallock shall have a chance to clear himself, but if he can't do it he can't

At this the trainmaster changed front so suddenly that Lldgerwood began to wonder if his estimate of the man's courage was at fault.

"Don't do that, Mr. Lidgerwood. Don't stir up the devil in that long haired knife fighter at such a time as this," he begged. "The Lord knows

you've got trouble enough on hand as it is without digging up something that belongs to the has beens."
"I know, but justice is justice," was the decisive rejoinder. "The question is still a live one, as the complaint of the grievance committee proves. If I dodge, my refusal to investigate will be used against us in the labor trouble which you say is brewing. I'm not going to dodge, McCloskey."

"You haven't asked my advice, Mr. Lidgerwood, but here it is anyway." said McCloskey. "Flemister, the owner of the Wire Silver mine over in Timanyon, Park, was the president of

manyoni Park, was the president of that building and loan outfit. He and Hallock are at daggers drawn, for some reason that I've never under-stood. If you could get them together perhaps they could make some sort of statement that would quiet the kickers for the time being, at any rate."
Lidgerwood looked op quickly. "That's odd." he said. "No longer than yesterday Gridley suggested precisely the same thing."

McCloskey was on his feet again and fumbling behind him for the door-

"I'm all in," he grimaced. "When it comes to figuring with Gridley and Flemister and Hallock, all in the same breath. I'm done."

Lidgerwood made a memorandum on his desk calendar to take the building and loan matter up with Hallock the following day. But another wreck in-tervened, and after the wreck a conference with the Red Butte mine owners postponed all office business for an additional twenty-four hours. It was late in the evening of the third day when the superintendent's special steamed home from the west, and Lidgerwood, who had dived in his car. went directly to his office in the Crow's

He had scarcely settled himself at his desk for an attack upon the accumulation of mail when Benson cam in. It was a trouble call, and th young engineer's face advertised it.
"It's no use talking, Lidgerwood," he
began, "I can't do business on this
railroad until you have killed on some
of the thugs and highbinders."
Lidgerwood flung the paper knife
aside and whirled his chair to face the iew complaint

"What is the matter now Jack?" h snapped rest of the gas been "Oh, nothing much—when you're sed to it, only about a thousand dollars' worth of dimension timber gone glimmering; that's all. It's the Gloria oridge We had the timbers all reads to pull out the old and put in the new and the shift was to be made today between trains. Last night every stick of the new stock disappeared."

Lidgerwood was not a profane man, but what he said to Benson in the coruscating minute or two which foiowed resolved itself into a very fair imitation of profanity, inclusive and world embracing.

"And you didn't have wit enough to leave a watchman on the Job," be chafed. "By heavens, this thing has got to stop, Benson! And it's going to stop if we have to call out the state nilitia and picket every mile of this otten railroad!"
"Do it." said Benson gruffly. "and

when it's done you notify me and I'll come back to work." And with that he tramped out and was too angry to emember to close the door.

Lidgerwood turned back to his deak savagely out of humor with Benson and with himself and raging inwardly at the mysterious thieves who were looting the company as boldly as an invading army might. At this the most inauspicious moment possible his eye fell upon the calendar memorandum, "See Hallock about B-L." and his finger was on the chief clerk's bell push before he remembered that it was late and that there had been no light in Hallock's room when he had mentions of the second war.

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