O. Henry Stories

VIII. The Ethics of Pig

By O. HENRY

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ON an eastbound train I went into the smoker and found Jefferson Peters, the only man with a brain west of the Wabash river who can use his cerebrum, cerebellum and medulla oblongata at the same time.

Jeff is in the line of unilegal graft. He is not to be dreaded by widows and orphans; he is a reducer of surplusage. His favorite disguise is that of the target bird at which the spendthrift or the reckless investor may shy a few inconsequential dollars. He is readily vocalized by tobacco; so, with the aid of two thick and easy burning brevas, I got the story of his latest Autoiycan adventure.

"In my line of business," said Jeff, "the hardest thing is to find an upright, trustworthy, strictly honorable partner to work a graft with. Some of the best men I ever worked with in a swindle would resort to trickery at times.

"So last summer I thinks I will go over into this section of country where I hear the serpent has not yet entered and see if I can find a partner naturally gifted with a talent for crime, but not yet contaminated by success.

"I found a village that seemed to show the right kind of a layout. The inhabitants hadn't found out that Adam had been dispossessed and were going right along naming the animals and killing snakes just as if they were in the garden of Eden. They call this town Mount Nebo, and it's up near the spot where Kentucky and West Virginia and North Carolina corner together. Them states don't meet? Well, it was in that neighborhood, anyway.

"After putting in a week proving I wasn't a revenue officer I went over to the store where the rude fourflushers of the hamlet lied, to see if I could get a line on the kind of man I wanted.

"'Gentlemen,' says I after we rubbed noses and gathered 'round the dried apple barrel, 'I don't suppose there's another community in the whole world into which sin and chicanery has less extensively permeated than this. Life here, where all the women are brave and propitious and all the men honest and expedient, must, indeed, be an idol. It reminds me,' says I, 'of Goldstein's beautiful ballad entitled "The Deserted Village," which says:

"'Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey;
What art can drive its charms away?
The judge rode slowly down the lane, mother,
For I'm to be queen of the May.'"

"'Why, yes, Mr. Peters,' says the storekeeper. 'I reckon we air about as moral and torpid a community as there be on the mounting, according to censuses of opinion, but I reckon you ain't ever met Rufe Tatum.'

"Worse," says the storekeeper. "He steals hogs."

"'Why, no,' says the town constable, 'he can't hardly have ever. That air Rufe is shore the monstrousest scalawag that has escaped hangin' on the galluses. And that puts me in mind that I ought to have turned Rufe out of the lockup day before yesterday. The thirty days he got for killin' Yance Goodloe was up then. A day or two more won't hurt Rufe any, though.'

"'Shucks, now,' says I in the mountain idiom, 'don't tell me there's a man in Mount Nebo as bad as that.'

"'Worse,' says the storekeeper. 'He steals hogs.'

"I thinks I will look up his Mr. Tatum. So a day or two after the constable turned him out I got acquainted with him and invited him out on the edge of town to sit on a log and talk business.

"What I wanted was a partner with a natural rural makeup to play a part in some little one act outrages that I was going to book with the Pittfall & Gin circuit in some of the western towns, and this R. Tatum was born for the role as sure as nature cast Fairbanks for the stuff that kept Eliza from sinking into the river.

"He was about the size of a first baseman, and he had ambiguous blue eyes like the china dog on the mantelpiece that Aunt Harriet used to play with when she was a child. His hair waved a little bit, like the statue of the Hinkus thrower in the Vacation at Rome, but the color of it reminded you of the 'Sunset In the Grand Canyon,' by an American artist, that they hang over the stovepipe holes in the salongs. He was the Reub, without needing a touch. You'd have known him for one, even if you'd seen him on the vaudeville stage with one cotton suspender and a straw over his ear.

"I told him what I wanted and found him ready to jump at the job.

"'Overlooking such a trivial little peccadillo as the habit of man-slaughter,' says I, 'what have you accomplished in the way of indirect brigandage or nonactionable thrift? Has your life been such that you could point to, with or without pride, as an evidence of your qualifications for the position?'

"'Why,' says he in his kind of southern system of procrastinated accents, 'hain't you heard tell? There ain't any man, black or white, in the Blue Ridge that can tote off a shoat as easy as I can without bein' heard, seen or cotched. I can lift a shoat,' he goes on, 'out of a pen, from under a piazza, at the trough, in the woods, day or night, anywhere or anyhow, and I guarantee nobody won't hear a squeal. It's all in the way you grab hold of 'em and carry 'em atterward. Some day,' goes on this gentle despoiler of pigpens, 'I hope to become reckernized as the champion shoat stealer of the world.'

"'It's proper to be ambitious,' says I, 'and hog stealing will do very well for Mount Nebo, but in the outside world, Mr. Tatum, it would be considered as crude a piece of business as a bear raid on Bay State Gas. However, it will do as a guarantee of good faith. We'll go into partnership. I've got $1,000 cash capital, and with that homeward plods atmosphere of yours we ought to be able to win out a few shares of Soon Parted preferred in the money market.'

"So I attaches Rufe, and we go away from Mount Nebo down into the lowlands. And all the way I coach him for his part in the grafts I had in mind. I had idled away two months on the Florida coast and was feeling all to the Ponce de Leon, besides having so many new schemes up my sleeve that I had to wear kimonos to hold 'em.

"I intended to assume a funnel shape and mow a path nine miles wide through the farming belt of the middle west, so we headed in that direction. But when we got as far as Lexington we found Binkley Bros.' circus there and the blue grass peasantry romping into town and pounding the Belgian blocks with their hand pegged sabots as artless and arbitrary as an extra session of a Datto Bryan duma. I never pass a circus without pulling the valve cord and coming down for a little Key West money, so I engaged a couple of rooms and board for Rufe and me at a house near the circus grounds run by a widow lady named Peevy. Then I took Rufe to a clothing store and gents' outfitted him. He showed up strong, as I knew he would, after he was rigged up in the ready-made rutabaga regalia. Me and old Misiitzky stuffed him into a bright blue suit with a Nile green visible plaid effect and riveted on a fancy vest of a light Tuskegee normal tan color, a red necktie and the yellowest pair of shoes in town. They were the first clothes Rufe had ever worn except the gingham layette and the butternut top dressing of his native kraal, and he looked as self conscious as an Igorrote with a new nose ring.

"That night I went down to the circus tents and opened a small shell game. Rufe was to be the capper. I gave him a roll of phony currency to bet with and kept a bunch of it in a special pocket to pay his winnings out of. No, I didn't mistrust him, but I simply can't manipulate the ball to lose when I see real money bet. My fingers go on a strike every time I try it.

"I set up my little table and began to show them how easy it was to guess which shell the little pea was under. The unlettered hinds gathered in a thick semicircle and began to nudge elbows and banter one another to bet. Then was when Rufe ought to have singlefooted up and called the turn on the little joker for a few tens and fives to get them started. But no Rufe. I'd seen him two or three times walking about and looking at the sideshow pictures with his mouth full of peanut candy, but he never came nigh.

"The crowd piked a little, but trying to work the shells without a capper is like fishing without bait. I closed the game with only $42 of the unearned increment, while I had been counting on yanking the yeomen for $200 at least. I went home at 11 and went to bed. I supposed that the circus had proved too alluring for Rufe and that he had succumbed to it, concert and all, but I meant to give him a lecture on general business principles in the morning.

"Just after Morpheus had got both my shoulders to the shuck mattress I hears a houseful of unbecoming and ribald noises, like a youngster screeching with green apple colic. I opens my door and calls out in the hall for the widow lady, and when she sticks her head out I says, 'Mrs. Peevy, ma'am, would you mind choking off that kid of yours so that honest people can get their rest?'

"'Sir,' says she, 'it's no child of mine. It's the pig squealing that your friend Mr. Tatum brought home to his room a couple of hours ago. And if you are uncle or second cousin or brother to it I'd appreciate your stopping its mouth, sir, yourself if you please.'

"I put on some of the polite outside habiliments of external society and went into Rufe's room. He had got up and lit his lamp and was pouring some milk into a tin pan on the floor for a dingy white, half grown, squealing pig.

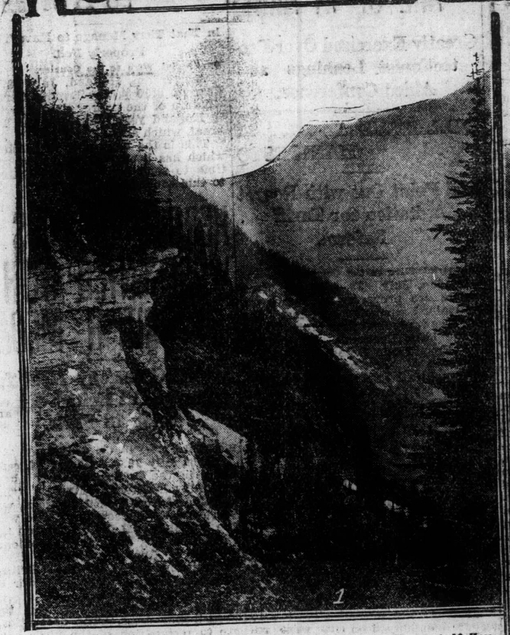
"'How is this, Rufe?' says I. 'You flimflammed in your part of the work tonight and put the game on crutches. And how do you explain the pig? It looks like backsliding to me.'

"'Now don't be too hard on me, Jeff,' says he. 'You know how long I've been used to stealing shoats. It's got to be a habit with me. And tonight, when I see such a fine chance, I couldn't help takin' it.'

"'Well,' says I, 'maybe you've really got kleptopigia. And maybe when we get out of the pig belt you'll turn your mind to higher and more remunerative misconduct. Why you should want to stain your soul with such a distasteful, feeble minded, perverted, roaring beast as that I can't understand.'

(Concluded on Monday).

WONDERFUL COUGAR COUNTRY



(1) Look-off Point, Cougar Valley, Glacier, B.C. (2) Illecillewaet Valley, Glacier, B.C. (3) Entrance to Caves of Nakimu.

HAVE you ever heard of the wonderful Cougar country? Wonderful it is in a score of ways, and few there be I imagine that have yet discovered the delectable region. The best way to find out about it is to go there, which we will proceed to do. Stop off at Glacier station of the C.P.R. in the Selkirks, arrange with the Outfitter and his ponies to guide and carry you over the ten-mile trail to the Cougar, and there you are in the very heart of an alpine garden, enclosed with giant peaks, glittering ice caps and snow fields, the extraordinary Nakimu caverns, and rivers and streams and waterfalls unnumbered. There's a programme for you to feast your eyes upon and revel in!

The trail trip thereto is in itself an unique one, ever rising in grade until the eye can see a long sweep of the Illecillewaet valley, where an express train looks like a child's toy, while Mt. Sir Donald looms higher and higher above his satellites. Across the beautiful valley at our feet rise the four summits of the Cougar mountain range, each one loftier than its mate. I only crave for you the experience of traversing that quartette of summits, as I did, until the panorama was limited only by the power of the eye. On every hand great ice deposits cling to the mountain sides or slope in acutest angle toward the Cougar river, racing through the valley bed. Hanging glaciers and titanic cornices of snow clothe the rugged rocks in their mantles of white, with tiny lakelets and alpine meadows marking the lower levels.

But there is yet another sight. Yonder is a cabin with a guide in charge who will conduct you through Canada's cavern world, only discovered within recent years. Here one may ramble and scramble through wierd underground streets, where the Cougar river has chiselled out its mysterious channels and where the imprisoned river is still at its task of cave-making as it has been for a trifle of forty thousand years. Ladders enable one to descend into the nether depths, amid stygian darkness except for the light one carries. The roar of the imprisoned stream, ever leaping from boulder to boulder, is awesomely deafening, for the mountain holds within its honeycombed arteries a series of Niagaras in cavern rooms of large dimensions and small.

You may walk down the Steeps of Time, visit the Witches Dancing Hall and the Brocken, gaze upon the Bridal Chamber, shrink back from the Inferno and feel small in the Judgment Hall. Walls of limestone look like the shifting scenes of a theatre, gothic arches and windows pierce the upper walls, fluted columns and exquisite draperies mark nature's imitations. In this vast chamber of eternal night one may hear the sepulchral notes of far away deeper torrents—or, later, stand on their brink—with a sound that drowns the loudest effort of the human voice.

A glint of daylight through a cave roof told us we were near the outer crust of mother earth, and a last scramble over a mass of boulders brought us out of the black world into the sunlit one, which looked more beautiful than ever. F. Y.

Verdun a Fatal Magnet

(Continued from Page 11.)

Bulgaria. The interior situation of Germany was officially admitted to be grave.

The Gamble of Verdun.

In this embarrassment, as the French observers view it, the Central Powers, ardently desiring peace, and urgently needing success to raise the spirits of the German people, depressed as they were by prolonged privations, looked to the French front and decided upon the adventure of Verdun.

The German plan seems originally to have been to concentrate artillery, munitions and men in such force over a limited length of front that the onrush would be irresistable. They chose Verdun because the position of the ancient fortress was such that the defenders had their backs to the River Meuse on two sides and because success there would give the greatest possible prestige with neutral powers, and the maximum comfort to their own people. It was also possible they knew what subsequent political events in France disclosed—that the defenses of Verdun were not, in view of the field tactics of this war, as strong as other parts of the front. It is the belief of military experts that the Germans hoped to break through the front there and destroy the French armies. It was imperative that success be rapid, according to this view, and when, after three days, the advance was checked in the region of Douaumont the project had failed. General Petain, as an official citation later revealed, had time to "re-establish a delicate situation." There was no longer hope of breaking through the French front.

Why Was It Kept Up?

Every yard of ground gained by the Germans before Verdun since February 24 has been at an extremely heavy sanguinary cost. The continuing of so expensive and fruitless an operation has puzzled the critics. It has been advanced that the Germans persisted with the object of exhausting the French forces and preventing an offensive by the Allies elsewhere. If that end was in view, the successes of the Allies in the Battle of the Somme show it was not attained.

The Battle of Verdun, if ordered with the intention of interfering with the offensive plans of the Allies, in nowise diminished the chances of carrying them out, whatever the fate of the discarded fortress, it having now no more significance apart from the prestige of the name than any other part along the front. Local success there has long been discounted and, in military opinion can have no vital effect, while the attempting of a wastage process by the Central Powers at this stage of the war is held to be illusory and certainly enormously costly. The Central Powers are in such numbers that they can afford such numbers that they can afford to launch them against the Allies in the mere hope of inflicting more danger than they suffer.

What Verdun Did for Allies.

The heroic defense of Verdun, on the other hand, has been for the Allies one of the notable developments of the war. It held German reserves there in such numbers as to put an end to the shifting of troops from front to front. It prevented the reinforcement of the Austrians, suffering from the loss of prisoners, with perhaps as many in casualties, to the armies under General Brussiloff. It obliged the Germans to prolong during five months a vast daily expenditure of projectiles that was expected to continue only a few days, and has so drawn upon their reserves of munitions that in the Battle of the Somme they were able to reply to the French and British guns in the proportion of only one shot for three.

Allies Advancing

The successful defense of Verdun and the successful offensives of the Allies in the North of France and on the Western front show at the end of the second year of the war that the finally prepared war map on which the German Chancellor held that the Allies ought to accept negotiations is undergoing singular modifications, with Russian occupying Lukowina and part of Galicia; the Italian recovering territory lost in the recent Austrian offensive and still in possession of the Isonzo region,, and with the French and British in possession of more than 30 villages on the banks of the Somme that had been occupied by the Germans for 20 months, and each of them transformed in the meantime into miniature fortresses.

The Allies have caught up with the advantage of the Central Powers in preparation, and any further modifications of the respective positions of the contending forces, it is believed, must be a reconquest of invaded territory by the Allies.

Ascendancy Is Realized

The destruction of adversary forces is another and a far more difficult matter. In this war the end may be nearer than many hope or may yet be far distant. There are no bases on which to calculate the progress of military operations or the resistance of the belligerents, even when apparently doomed to defeat. What is clear is that the anticipated ascendency of the Allies, arising from their unrestricted resources, appears to have been realized.

A MERCHANT SHIP IS MERCHANT SHIP EVEN WITH GUNS

Important Decision Handed Down in Montreal by Learned Judge.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Montreal, July 29.—The fact that a merchant ship is armed with a gun for defensive purposes, does not change her character, so that men engaged as merchant ship engineers can refuse to sail on her, Judge Leet decided yesterday in the case of Frank Smith, Joseph Geraherty, Edward Cook, Fred Rudd and Charles Lawfield, New York who were charged with deserting their ship. The men were signed in New York as engineers, and when they reached Montreal, found the ship they were to sail on was armed. They refused to board her and were arrested. The men were sentenced to ten days each in jail.

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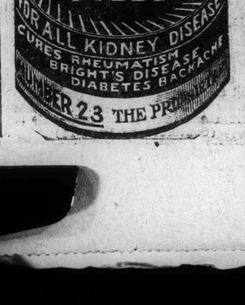

ITALY'S ENTRANCE INTO THE WAR

(Continued from Page 11.)

allies the greatest possible services.

"Italy began her operations just at the time when the Russians were obliged to retreat. The strong army which Cadorna threw across the northern border menacing Austria, may have saved that Russian retreat from a complete disaster. Similarly, when the Germans attacked Verdun, Cadorna started a strong offensive along the Isonzo River, which prevented Austria from sending to the aid of the German crown prince large numbers of troops and artillery which had been prepared for that purpose.

Drew Austrians From the East

Equal advantages have recently been obtained by Austria's temporary invasion of a small section of the Italian Trentino front in the Asiago district. If Austria had not centered all her forces in this enterprise it would have been much more difficult for Russia to launch the marvellous offensive which she is now conducting. Profiting by the situation, General Cadorna attacked the Austrians so energetically that their removal from the Alps to the Carpathians to fight the Russians has been out of the question.

In Albania General Cadorna likewise aided our Allies. It being materially impossible to save Serbia and Montenegro, he transformed the Albanian seaport of Avlona into an impregnable entrenched camp, threatening and checking the Austians in the same manner that the Allied troops at Saloniki have held back the Bulgarians.

A King Like Belgium's

Above all others in this war stands our King, modest soldier and fevent patriot. He and King Albert are the only sovereigns in this war who have never abandoned their place at the front.

Italy Take Four zedinewc

The difficulties of the war which Italy is waging may be understood only by visiting out battle fronts. They are stretched along the highest altitudes in which warfare has ever been known. With all the advantageous positions in the prior possession of Austrians, our enemies have to be dug out of their nests, 10,000 feet up amid eternal shows. To her natural defenses Austria has added the most powerful modern system of fortifications.

What Italians Have Gained

Still the Italians have gained ground, and all along have conquered territory on the right bank of the Isenzo except at Gorizia and Tolmino, which are entrenched samps defended by almost impregnable mountains, part of the Codtina, and part of the Carso plateau, the High Monte Nero Ridge, the Ampezzo territory, including Cortina, and part of the famous Dolomite Road, which is the shortest communication between Toblach and Trent. We had almost reached Rocerto when the Austrian incursion into Trent obliged us to retreat within our own frontier.

But with this exception, Austrians have always been on the defensive and have lost about 200 towns and villages, 40,000 prisoners, dozens of cannon, hundreds of machine guns, several thousand rifles, all of which has more than ordinary value because they were taken in a mountainous country where it is difficult to replace captured artillery and stores.

Austria Will Let in Supplies

Has Assured U. S. Informally Polish Relief is Possible.

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Washington, D.C., July 29.—Informal assurances that Austria-Hungary is disposed to respond favorably to President Wilson's personal appeal for permission for shipments of American relief supplies to Poles in territory held by Austrian forces have been given personally by foreign minister Burian to Ambassador Penfield.

The State Department also received from Ambassador Page, the British foreign office statement of Great Britain's willingness to permit importations of food stuffs into Poland to be administered by a commission appointed by President Wilson, provided the German and Austrian occupying armies would not seize or remove products of the occupied territory. The condition, it is feared, may block the negotiations.

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DEFENCE ENTERS STRONG PROTEST OVER PROCEDU

Take Exception to Wh Conduct of Trial Agains Former Ministers.

GOT AFTER MR. R. A. BONN

He is Accused of "Smirk for the Benefit of the Jury."

By Special Wire to the Courier.

Winnipeg, July 29.—Formal jection to the evidence of V. W. wood, former provincial archi being offered by the crown ag the ex-ministers was entered ye day when the trial was resu and noted by Mr. Justice Pren gast. A. J. Andrews for the def said he wished to reserve any r necessary in this matter. Witn he said, was one of the defend indicted with the accused and indictment against him had n been disposed of. Counsel clai Horwood was competent witness the defense, but not for the Cro under the Canada Evidence Horwood's examination was con ued by R. A. Bonnar for the Cro He said there was no contract Caissons. Nothing was said a what contractor Kelly should ge the Caissons aside from Horwo estimate at $534,288. Defense fered many objections to the co of the examination and Georg Coldwell sat with the lawyers actively advised them.

Defence Take Exception.

Horwood told again of a me with Mr. Coldwell shortly b tenders were advertised for, w was desired to change from pil caissons and from reinforced con to steel. The defence objected Bonnar was cross-examining his witness.

"I was thinking" replied bo "that a little later on I would permission to cross-examine the ness."

There was a steady stream o jections from the defense ta twenty in the first hour. And said he was "exasperated" at the the crown was conducting the

Witness Drew Influences.

Horwood had recommended ploying a firm of engineers to plans for the caissons. This was done, and when the caissons wer most in, Dr. Montague being "o cus of protecting them" emp Engineers Shankland and Bryc Jack. Defence objected to Hor drawing inferences and said might as well deliver the ver Half a dozen lawyers talked at

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