

"Great stuff," exulted Jimmie. "Say, Mr. McDermott, if the News man comes around, would it be too much to ask you to keep that under your hat? I'd like to pull it as a scoop."

"That will be all right, you can have it for your very own," and Mac guided the reporter to the door.

"By the way, there's just one other question. Will any of the stock be placed locally?"

"Except that held by Mr. Jamieson and myself, I do not see how we can let any of it go here. I have several business associates in the east who have been watching our progress, and they want to get in on this. The fifty thousand necessary by the agreement will be held by Mr. Jamieson, Mr. Beattie, my partner in the east, and myself. I would like to see some of my friends in New Birmingham associated with us, but we are a selfish crowd. When we see a good thing we want all we can get of it."

"Mac, you're a wonder," Phil ejaculated, when the door had finally closed on Barr.

"Seattle has made the same remark," and Mac glanced at his watch. "By the way, we should wire Seattle."

"That's right. He'll be anxious to know the result."

"Yes, and we should instruct him to let that property go at fifty thousand. You haven't forgot that we hold an option on it?"

"At twenty thousand. That's right, and we clean up thirty thousand on the deal. Mac, I used to know a song that the New Yorkers were supposed to sing when they were far from home. 'Take me back to New York town,' it was. It was real pathetic, Mac."

There was a pause. Phil had expected some response. He asked almost timidly, "When do we get out?"

"Five thousand of the profits will go towards our immediate expenses. The remainder will be invested in the company. We will purchase the necessary fifty thousand shares, which the agreement demands at fifty cents. The agreement says nothing as to the price."

"What?" Phil almost exploded. "With our own money, real, honest, hard-earned money?"

"Phil, muh boy, we're only started. Wait until you see that little old McDermott horse coming down the stretch. The colours are green and gold."

"Well, it's good to hear you talking like yourself, instead of using moth-eaten words that were banished from Broadway about the time Hearst got out his first extra," was the consolation Phil drew from the decision.

The first meeting of the shareholders of the Consumers' Power Company was held a week later, in the office which had been taken in the new Victoria Block. The proceedings were formal and occupied only a few moments. Mr. James McDermott was elected President. Mr. Phillip Jamieson became vice-president and general manager, and Mr. George Hilton, clerk in the hotel, was given a share of stock and the office of secretary.

Other than the elections but one motion was put through. The president was awarded fifty thousand dollars as a bonus for the successful promotion and organization of the company.

Mr. William Riley was very sorry, not to say extremely peeved. It was he who had parted with the ten acres below the reservoir. The fact that he had made a straight profit of ten thousand dollars was forgotten in the fact that another had tripped that in a few weeks. But he spent little time brooding over the fact. A more important matter awaited his decision. He had twenty thousand dollars waiting for reinvestment.

Real estate, he felt, was a poor buy. He had bought and sold real estate all his life, and he was never sure of a definite income. He could not afford to pay taxes. Values were high. They could not go higher for a long time. And as he revolved these reasons for turning to some new field, in his mind, he knew that he had already made his decision.

He entered the office of the Consumers' Power Company. "Ah, Mr. Riley," said Mac, rising. "Glad to see you. I want all the friends who helped



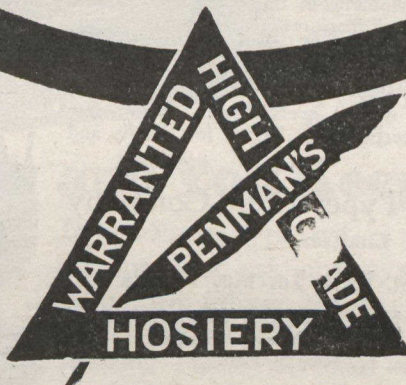
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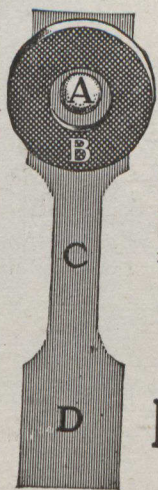
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