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The Bishop's Shadow

by I. T. THURSTON

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CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

A Strike.

The taste of conflict, the sight of blood, had roused to a fierce flame the smouldering spirit of lawlessness and insurrection in the mob. A savage rage seemed to have taken possession of the men as, with frantic haste and mad delight, they tore up cobble-stones and built a huge barricade across the track. When it was completed, Carrots darted up on top of it and waved a red handkerchief above his head. A hoarse roar of approval broke from the mob, but Steel sternly ordered the boy down and hissed in his ear, "You fool! You might have spoiled everything by that! Don't ye show that again till I give the signal—d'ye hear?"

Carrots nodded with an evil gleam in his narrow eyes, that made Theo shiver.

"Come on, now. We've done enough for once," Steel added, and keeping his hand on the arm of the boy the two disappeared in the throng that was slowly melting away.

Then, with a long breath, Jimmy turned to Theodore.

"My!" he exclaimed, in a tone of shuddering satisfaction. "It's awful, ain't it, Theo! S'pose he's dead?" He gazed with half fearful interest toward the policeman who had been clubbed and about whom a group had gathered.

"Looks like it. There comes some more p'lice. They'll take care of him. Come on, Jimmy, let's go home."

"Oh, no, Theo, don't go home, yet. Let's go an' see what's goin' on over there," and Jimmy turned into a cross street through which the greater portion of the crowd was passing.

"There's something the matter over at the depot," said Theodore, as he followed, half willingly and half reluctantly, in Jimmy's eager footsteps.

About the depot there was usually a constant stream of cars coming and

going, but to-day the streets looked bare and deserted.

When the boys reached the square only two cars were in sight, and these two were approaching, one behind the other, on the same track. As they drew near, they were seen to contain each six or eight policemen, fully armed and with stern, resolute faces. The mob again howled and hooted at the motormen and conductors, and showered them with dirt and small stones, but made no attempt to stop the cars.

No cars were run after dark that evening, and the next day they were run only at intervals of an hour, and each one carried a heavily armed guard. The strikers and their lawless sympathizers continued to throng the streets and to threaten all carmen who remained on duty. Now and then a car window was broken or an obstruction placed on the tracks, but there was no serious outbreak, and it was rumoured that a compromise between the company and the strikers was under consideration, and that the trouble would soon be at an end.

So a week slipped away. One morning Theodore was on his way from one office to another when he heard the sound of drum and fife and saw a body of the strikers marching up Washington Street. Every boy within sight or hearing at once turned in after the procession, and Theodore followed with the rest.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning and the streets were full of shoppers, many of them ladies who had been afraid to venture out during the past week.

As if they had risen out of the ground, scores of rough-looking men and street boys began to push and jostle the shoppers on the narrow sidewalks until many of the frightened women took refuge in the stores, and the shopkeepers, fearful of what might follow, began hastily putting up their shutters and making ready to close their stores, if necessary. These signs of apprehension gave great delight to the rougher element in the streets, and they yelled and hooted uproariously at the cautious shopkeepers, but they did not stop. Steadily, swiftly they followed that body of men marching with dark, determined faces to the sound of the fife and drum.

"Where are they going?" Theo asked of a man at his side and the reply was,

"To the car-house, I reckon. They're ripe for mischief now."

"What's stirred 'em up again—anything new?" the boy questioned.

"Many of the strikers have been discharged and new men brought on—five hundred of them—from New York and Chicago. I'm afraid we haven't seen the worst of the troubles yet."

"Look! Look!" cried a boy, close beside Theodore, and the latter looking ahead, saw a squad of mounted officers coming through a cross street. Without stopping to parley they charged into the marching strikers and dispersed them, silencing the fife and drum, and when the furious mob of followers and sympathizers yelled threats and defiance at the officers, the latter charged into the mob riding up to the pavement and forcing the people back into the stores and dwellings behind them.

This was as fuel to the fire of anger and insurrection. Deep and dire threats passed from lip to lip, and evil purpose hardened into grim determination as the mob slowly surged in the direction of the car-house, after the officers had passed on. The throng was far more quiet now, and far more dangerous. Again and again, Theodore caught glimpses of Tom Steel's insignificant face, and like a long, dark shadow, Carrots followed ever at his heels.

No cars were running now, but the boy heard low-spoken references to

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new men and "scabs," and "the will of the people," as, almost without effort of his own, he was borne onward with the throng.

At a little distance from the car-house the strikers again drew together and stood mostly in gloomy silence, their eyes ever turning toward the closed doors of the great building before them. The vast crowd waited, too, in a silence that seemed to throb and pulse with intense and bitter feeling. The strikers had stopped in the middle of the

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John J. Callan.