

THE CALLING OF DAN MATTHEWS

same mud-flat being, incidentally, the property of the patriotic Judge.

Thus Corinth took the railroad to her heart, literally. The depot, the yards, the red section-house and the water-tank are all in the very center of the town. Every train while stopping for water (and they all stop) blocks two of the three principal streets. And when, after waiting in the rain or snow until his patience is nearly exhausted, the humble Corinthian goes to the only remaining crossing, he always gets there just in time to meet a long freight backing onto the siding. Nowhere in the whole place can one escape the screaming whistle, clanging bell, and crashing drawbar. Day and night the rumble of the heavy trains jars and disturbs the peacefulness of the little village.

But the railroad did something for Corinth; not too much, but something. It did more for Judge Strong. For a time the town grew rapidly. Fulfillment of the Judge's prophecies seemed immediate and certain. Then, as mysteriously as they had come, the boom days departed. The mills, factories and shops that were going to be, established themselves elsewhere. The sound of the builder's hammer was no longer heard. The Doctor says that Judge Strong had come to believe in his own prediction, or at least, fearing that his prophecy might prove true, refused to part with more land except at prices that would be justified only in a great metropolis.

Neighboring towns that were born when Corinth was middle-aged, flourished and have become cities