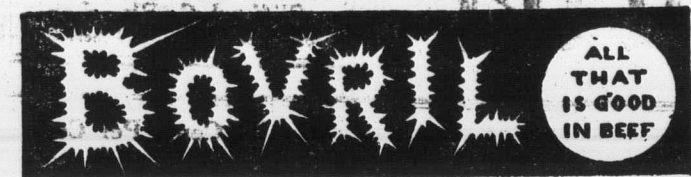


BOVRIL IMPROVES YOUR PIES



Every Man For Himself

By HOPKINS MOORHOUSE

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CHAPTER VIII.—(Cont'd.)

Thus ran the reflections of Hughey Podmore as he lounged comfortably in a leather chair aboard the private car, "Obaska," and idly watched the endless flow of the Algoma wilderness pass the windows monotonously. The car had taken an inspection party west to the head of the lakes, but a wire from the Vice-President was sending the President back to headquarters unexpectedly. Besides President Wade, Podmore and Taylor, the steward, the only person on board was Bob Cranston. Cranston was chief of the railroad's Special Service Department. Taylor was busy in the kitchen, preparing dinner. Cranston and the President had the brass-railed observation platform at the rear of the car to themselves and were deep in earnest conversation; they had shut the door at their backs and the sound of their voices was lost in the roar of the wheels.

Hughey Podmore smiled cynically as he watched them. There was nothing in President Wade's fine strong profile to indicate the trend of talk. Both, in fact, were men who seldom allowed what they were thinking to reflect in their facial expressions too readily. Nevertheless, the perspicacious Mr. Podmore could surmise the subject of conversation, or at any rate give a guess which was close enough to satisfy his own curiosity.

He amused himself by running over the list of possible topics. Wade was a big man in financial circles, a man of rugged and plain-spoken dealings who commanded the confidence of every associate and was respected even by his enemies. There were many matters of moment which he might have discussed with bankers or lawyers or statesmen, but which he would hardly attempt with a bull-necked bonehead like Cranston. Government railway bond issues, franchises and stock quotations were beyond that cheap stuff's depth. Probably Cranston was holding forth in regard to some petty theft which his crew of spotters had discovered, some ticket-scalping conductor—

Or there was old Nat Lawson's case in which Wade was interested; it was a topic that was often uppermost in the railway President's mind, as Podmore knew, and Hughey smiled inscrutably at the smoke curling from his cigarette. Old Nat, the founder and former president of the Interprovincial Loan & Savings Company—the honest old fool whom Nickleby had succeeded in overcoming by a trick, and whose shoes J. Cuthbert was now wearing! It would take more than the friendship of a Benjamin Wade, powerful though that was, to salvage Old Nat. That manny-whiskered old goat was sunk in too many fathoms of water; ever to wide ashore. (He smiled at his poor pun.) The missing power-of-attorney that had scuttled the Lawson supporters would continue missing for all time to come. Mr. J. Cuthbert Nickleby, the then genial secretary, had seen to that once for all; in fact, it had been a charred fragment of the document which Mr. Hughey Podmore had used as a card of introduction when he had had his first long and very interesting session with Friend Nickleby.

Some class to Nickleby all right. Here were methods which Mr. Podmore could understand and admire. It was because the minds of Messrs. Podmore and Nickleby ran in the same groove that he had been able to unearth enough of Nickleby's very private plans to persuade that rising young financier that it was better to set another plate at the head table than to have the dishes smashed and Lucullus waylaid before he could reach the banquetting-hall.

So Mr. Podmore had hung up his hat, accepted a cigar and joined the congenial spirit and able counselor. And inasmuch as President Wade, of the Canadian Lake Shores Railroad, was seeking about that time for a private secretary with a newspaper

training; inasmuch as it was known to J. Cuthbert Nickleby that the said President Wade hoped to restore Old Nat Lawson to his former place in the business world by acquiring control of the Interprovincial Loan & Savings Company—inasmuch as it seemed desirable in the interests of Messrs. Nickleby and Podmore that Mr. Podmore should apply for the vacant secretaryship. Podmore had got the position, thereby enabling Nickleby to keep a finger upon the pulse of his position.

Wade was shrewd, clever, a big man; he knew many things, did Benjamin Wade, railway magnate. But, reflected Hughey, there were many things also which he did not know, and there was a disagreeable twist in the corner of Podmore's mouth as he lounged and smoked. His revered chief did not know, for instance, that his very competent secretary had spent the better part of an afternoon alone in the private car "Obaska," listening to the click of the tumblers in the little secret wall safe which the President had had built in behind a sliding panel—listening so intelligently that the said very competent secretary had come away with the combination.

Podmore's further enjoyment of retrospection was cut short by a sudden gesture which riveted his attention upon the two men on the rear platform. Cranston had turned suddenly and was peering in at him; almost automatically Podmore's eyes dropped quickly to the open magazine on his knee. There was a certain hint of caution on the railroad detective's face that did not escape the astute secretary. The latter's vigilance was rewarded presently by seeing Cranston reach into an inside pocket, pull out a bulky blue envelope and quickly pass it across to the President. The latter as quickly stowed it out of sight in an inner pocket of his tweed coat and himself cast a hasty glance over his shoulder to see if he had been observed. But again Mr. Podmore's gaze dropped in time and when he raised his eyes casually from his magazine it was to note an expression of satisfaction upon the faces of both gentlemen. They got up and came inside, laughing rather loudly.

"That there steak and onions Taylor's cookin' is sure goin' to hit the spot," cried Cranston, sniffing with relish. "Eh, Hughey?" He dropped into the chair alongside the secretary with a familiar slap on the latter's knee, and thrust his legs out in the sprawling abandon of a comfortable stretch.

Unfortunately he did this just as President Wade, having turned to toss away the end of his cigar, took a step forward with a hand thrust into an inside pocket of his coat, evidently intending to put away in the safe the envelope which Cranston had given him. The result of Cranston's sudden movement and Wade's awkward position was that the President tripped, lost his balance and would have measured full length on the car floor if Cranston had not caught him. In his effort to save himself the blue envelope was jerked out of his pocket and fell directly at Podmore's feet.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, sir!" apologized Cranston hurriedly.

"That's all right, Bob," laughed Wade good naturedly. "Thanks, Hughey," as his secretary handed him the envelope. "Why, what's the matter?"

Podmore's face had gone suddenly white and he was trembling visibly. "Ain't you feelin' well, Hughey?" enquired Cranston with concern. He rang quickly for highballs.

"It's all right,—thanks," stammered Podmore hastily. "I—I guess it's just a little faintness due to the fact that I ate practically no lunch—I'm all right now."

Nevertheless when Taylor arrived with the decanter Podmore poured himself an extra stiff drink. He had need of it. For a second time he had lost his poise, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he prevented any further manifestation of the fact during the meal and the evening which followed. For unless he was very much mistaken—and he felt sure that he was not—that envelope he had picked up and handed to the President had been identical blue linen envelope that had been stolen weeks ago! The size of it, the feel of it, the daubs of gray sealing-wax—Oh, there was no mistaking it!

How in thunderation had it come into Cranston's hands—Cranston, of all men! Had Cranston pulled off the stunt? Had Podmore been doing him an injustice? He studied the chief of the Special Service Department with a new and wide-awake interest. If Cranston had pulled this off, it was under orders—Wade's, of course. Then that suspicion which had kept recurring every time he had tried to think out the mystery of the disappearance was correct. It was a political move! The opponents of the Government were lining up for the approaching election with open charges of malfeasance, graft—the same old game! Wade, he knew, had had friction with the present administration over certain legislation; that was sufficient motive for him taking a hand, although it was hardly likely that a man of Wade's standing would allow himself to become involved in such

back-alley tactics—unless Nickleby—the Interprovincial—! Podmore's thoughts were not running as clearly as usual. They kept pocketing themselves provokingly in blind alleys that led nowhere, or scattering in mazes that led everywhere. There was such a wide field of speculation open, once he began to consider things from the political angle, that it was difficult to reach any very definite conclusion. He was not now so concerned as to the why or the how of what had happened; the cold analysis of motives and methods was dwarfed by the one big fact that here on board the private car and within easy reach was that blessed envelope, containing fifty thousand dollars of any man's money. For it did not look as if it had been tampered with; the seals were still unbroken. Right here, within a few yards of where he sat, was that little old bunch of greenbacks that he had planned so earnestly to take unto his bosom and that had cost him so many heartburnings this past two weeks. Talk about luck! Talk about Opportunity knocking once on somebody's door! Why, the Old Dame was chopping down his door with an axe!

With his mind in such a chaos of confused emotions Hughey found it difficult to keep up his end of the conversation and he was not sorry when the others showed a tendency to turn in early. Once the lights were dimmed he could hardly wait the reasonable length of time which must elapse before the other three occupants were asleep, so eager was he to make his investigations. But at last the snores of Cranston and the steward and the steady breathing of President Wade satisfied him that the way was clear.

Quietly he slipped from his berth. He had not undressed, except to remove his boots and coat, and in two minutes he had the envelope in his hands. He slipped noiselessly down the aisle to the steward's kitchen, switched on a light and examined the prize leisurely. He felt it carefully, hefted it in one hand, then, with the aid of a thin-bladed paring knife he succeeded in loosening a corner of the flap sufficiently to allow of a peek at the contents without disturbing the seals.

His involuntary exclamation of satisfaction when he verified the contents as a package of greenbacks was drowned fortunately in the hum of the train. It was the missing campaign fund contribution beyond a doubt.

Back down the dimly lighted aisle with its swaying green curtains, past the sleepers he slipped noiselessly to the writing desk where he carefully regummed the corner of the flap, leaving no trace of his inspection. Then he sank into a leather chair and lit a cigarette with a cheerful grin on his face.

(To be continued.)

Out of Her Poverty.

It was a cold, dark evening, and the city lights only intensified by their sharp contrast the gloom of the storm. It was the time when wealthy shoppers were eating hot dinners, and when the shop-girls were plodding home, many too poor to ride through the long day's standing and work.

One girl was hurrying home through the slush, after a hard day's work. She was a delicate girl, poorly dressed, and wholly unable to keep out the winter's cold, with a thin fall cloak. She was evidently very timid and self-absorbed.

A blind man was sitting in an alley by the pavement, silently offering pencils for sale to the heedless crowd. The wind and sleet beat upon him. He had no overcoat. His thin hands clasped with purple fingers the wet, sleet-covered pencils. He looked as if the cold had congealed him.

The girl passed the man, as did the rest of the hurrying crowd. When she had walked half a block away she fumbled in her pocket, and turned and walked back.

For a moment she looked intently at the venter of pencils, and when she saw that he gave no sign, she quietly dropped a ten-cent piece into his fingers, and walked on.

But she was evidently troubled, for her steps grew slower.

Then she stopped, turned, and walked rapidly back to the dark alley, and the man half hiding in it. Bending over him, she said softly, "Are you really blind?"

The man lifted his head and showed her his slight eyes. Then with an indescribable gesture he pointed to his breast. There hung the dull badge of the Grand Army of the Republic.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she said humbly. "Please give me back my ten cents."

"Yes, ma'am," he answered, and held out the coin.

She took out her purse. It was a very thin one. It contained but two dollars, one-third of her week's hard earnings—all she had. She put one dollar of it into his hand saying, "Take this instead and go home now; you ought not to sit here in this bitter wind."

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Would you be loved? Speak love to the world.

Would you be successful? Speak success to the world.

For all the world is so closely akin that not one individual may realize his desire except all the world share it with him. And every good word you send into the world is a silent, mighty power, working for Peace, Health, Love, Joy, Success to all the world—including yourself.—Elizabeth Towne.

Fear nothing but doubt, hate nothing but idleness, dislike no one but the business man who expects to sell but won't buy.

HOME BEAUTIFUL

By DOROTHY ETHEL WALSH.
Artificial Flowers Are Applied to a Plaque and form a wall decoration.

Flower pictures are much in vogue, and decorated plaques are taking their places also as wall decorations. A clever woman I know, however, solved the problem of an overmantel decoration in a most original manner. The plaques on sale in the shops she found a little more expensive than she could afford, and yet they were so lovely that she hated to give up the idea.

The style that mostly intrigued her was that with an urn in bas relief with the artificially prepared flowers emerging from it and the entire thing placed against an oval black wooden plaque framed in red Jaquer. The artificial flowers were within the limit of her purse, so she purchased a most delectably colored bunch, and on the same shopping tour she secured a sheet of black cardboard and some white.

When at home she secured an illustration of an urn of pleasing lines and traced it onto the white cardboard. She then clipped the stems of the flowers as close as possible and glued them (the stems) as flat as she could onto the black cardboard. She then cut out the white cardboard urn and glued it in turn on to the black and over the stems of the flowers easing it a little at that point.

A black wooden frame was the next step and to make it complete a narrow blue band was placed on the frame. The result you can see in the picture. I think the woman is justified in feeling proud.

About the House

A Winter Evening.

Soft hands of white across a sunny sky—
And then the low-toned twilight creeping on,
A neighboring roof deep etched with burdening snow;
Hill, field, and tree beyond,
Blending in one wide, gentle blur of gray;
Brown shrubs and withered grasses wave aloft
Their invitation to a passing feathered guest,
While here and there, and here again
Faint wisps of smoke curl upward,
Telling once more the tale of little homes,
Whither the toil-worn hasten, to sit them down and rest.

So I will spread a table here beside our hearth;
A joyful feast, for love broods over it,
Lending the snow-white lustre of his wings,
And now all things made ready, I will wait,
And listen for the voice I know so well. —Louise M. Gridley.

Curtain Fabrics That Launder Well.

Breathes there a woman with fingers pricked from the annual martyrdom of curtain stretching who has not vowed, year after year, to emancipate herself forever from the thraldom of drapery materials which refuse to hang to the queen's taste unless they emerge, straight and crisp, from curtain stretchers?

Textile manufacturers, quick to sense the requirements of the modern housekeeper, have placed on the market fascinating fabrics in various weaves which wash and iron as easily and successfully as handkerchief linen. These materials range, in design and texture, from the coarse flax nets, so frequently employed by interior decorators, to the sheers of fine lace suitable for close-fitting glass curtains. By careful shopping and wise selection the woman who must economize in time and energy can, therefore, easily eliminate curtain materials which must be stretched without detracting from either the beauty or suitability of her drapery fabrics. While it is possible to purchase ready-made curtains that will iron satisfactorily, there is a decided advantage in buying goods by the yard, since the choice of materials is infinitely greater.

Among the materials one may always be sure of are voile, marquisette, art muslin, English casement cloth, printed linen, fine Swiss, silk gauze, Georgette crepe and the various special weaves made for the purpose by manufacturers who bestow upon them their own trade-marked names.

It is quite impossible to iron the round-mesh nets that are so luring in the shops. While they stretch beautifully, they wriggle away from an iron most distractingly. Even some of the square mesh nets, which look perfectly innocent, have the same bad habit and should only be allowed to enter the family after a sample has been taken on probation. Although scrim and madras usually iron satisfactorily, occasionally one finds pieces that are disappointing. These exceptions to the rule, however, should not be allowed to give the respectable members of these well known families a bad name or prejudice the buyer against these desirable materials.

Old-fashioned lace curtains have made their exit from the majority of homes furnished in good taste. Their place has been taken largely by flax nets and similar materials suitable for

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"Would it make you happy?" inquired Jenny.

"Ay, that it would; but such folks as I can't go to the playhouse, and so I shall never hear her."

"Don't be so sure of that," said Jenny. "Sit down, my friend, and listen."

She then sang, with genuine glee, one of her best songs. The old woman was wild with delight and wonder, when she added: "Now you have heard Jenny Lind."

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