

The King of Arcadia

"In the courts and out of them. I might mention that it was one of his cow-men who killed Sanderson; though that was purely a personal quarrel, I believe. The trouble began with his refusal to sell us a few acres of land and a worthless mining-claim which our reservoir may submerge, and we were obliged to resort to the courts. He is fighting for delay now, and in the meantime he encourages his cowboys to maintain a sort of guerrilla warfare on the contractors: stealing tools, disabling machinery, and that sort of thing. This was Macpherson's story, and I'm passing it on to you. You are forty miles from the nearest sheriff's office over there; but when you need help, you'll get it. Of course, the company will back you—to the last dollar in the treasury, if necessary."

Ballard's rejoinder was placatory. "It seems a pity to open up the new country with a feud," he said, thinking of his native State and of what these little wars had done for some portions of it. "Can't the old fellow be conciliated in some way?"

"I don't know," replied the president doubtfully. "We want peaceable possession, of course, if we can get it; capital is always on the side of peace. In fact, we authorised Macpherson to buy peace at any price in reason, and we'll give you the same authority. But Macpherson always rep-