

it planned a great bridge across a gorge in the same hour; of a man who would quote a verse of poetry while a flock of wild pigeons went whirring down a pine-girt valley in the shimmer of the sun.

On the occasion when he had quoted a verse of poetry to them, one of them said to him with a side-long glance, "You seem to be dead-struck on Nature, Ingolby."

To that, with a sly quirk of the mouth, and meaning to mystify his wooden-headed questioner still more, he answered: "Dead-struck? Dead-drunk, you mean. I'm a Nature's dipsomaniac—as you can see," he added with a sly note of irony.

Then instantly he had drawn the little circle of experts into a discussion upon technical questions of railway-buildings and finance, which made demands upon all their resources and knowledge. In that conference he gave especial attention to the snub-souled financier who had sneered at his love of Nature. He tied his critic up in knots of self-assertion and bad logic which presently he deftly, deliberately and skilfully untied, to the delight of all the group.

"He's got as much in his ten years in the business as we've got out of half a life-time," said the chief of his admirers. This was the President who had first welcomed him into business, and introduced him to his colleagues in enterprise.

"I shouldn't be surprised if the belt flew off the wheel some day," savagely said Ingolby's snub-souled critic, whose enmity was held in check by the fact that on Ingolby, for the moment, depended the safety of the hard cash he had invested.

But the qualities which alienated an expert here and there caught the imagination of the pioneer spirits of Lebanon. Except those who, for financial reasons, were opposed to him, and must therefore pit themselves against him, as the representatives of bigger forces behind them,