



THE DELUGE

By DAVID GRAHAM PHILLIPS, Author of "THE CUST," etc.
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CHAPTER XVIII.—Continued.

"I can't take that big bundle along with me, Joe," said I. "Besides, it ain't safe. Put it in the bank and send me a check."

"Not on your life," replied Healey with a laugh. "The suckers we trimmed gave checks, and I turned 'em into cash as soon as the banks opened. I want it any too spry, either. Two of the damned sneaks consulted lawyers as soon as they sobered off, and tried to stop payment on their checks. They're threatening proceedings. You must take the dough away with you, and I don't want a receipt."

"Trimming suckers, eh?" said I, not able to decide what to do. "Their fathers stole it from the public," he explained. "They're drunken little snobs, not fit to have money. I'm doing a public service by relieving them of it. If I'd a got more, I'd feel that much more"—he vented his light, cool, sarcastic laugh—"more patriotic."

"I can't take it," said I, feeling that, in my present condition, to take it would be very near to betraying the confidence of my old friend.

"They lost it in a straight game," he hastened to assure me. "I haven't had a 'brace' box or crooked wheel for four years." This with a sober face and a twinkle in his eye. "But even if I had helped chance to do the good work of teaching them to take care of their money, you'd not refuse me. Up town and down town, and all over the place, what's business, when you come to look at it sensibly, but trading stolen goods? Do you know a man who could honestly earn more than ten or twenty thousand a year—good clean or by good clean work?"

"Oh, for that matter, your money's as clean as anybody's," said I. "But you know I'm a speculator, Joe. I have my downs—and this happens to be a stormy time for me. If I take your money, I mayn't be able to account for it or even to pay dividends on it—maybe a year or so."

"It's all right, old man. I'll never give it a thought till you remind me of it. Use it as you'd use your own. I've got to put it behind somebody's luck—why not yours?"

He finished doing up the package, then he seated himself, and we both looked at it through the smoke of our cigars.

"It's just as easy to deal in big sums as in little, in large matters as in small, isn't it, Joe," said I, "once one gets in the way of it?"

"Do you remember—away back there—the morning," he asked musingly—"the last morning—you and I got up from the straw in the stables over at Jerome Park—the stables they let us sleep in?"

"And went out in the dawn to roost on the rails and spy on the speed trials of old Revel's horses?"

"Exactly," said Joe, and we looked at each other and laughed. "We in rags—zosh, how chilly it was that morning! Do you remember what we talked about?"

"No," said I, though I did.

"I was proposing to turn a crooked trick—and you wouldn't have it. You persuaded me to keep straight, Matt. I've never forgotten it. You kept me straight—showed me what a fool a man was to load himself down with a petty larceny record. You made a man of me, Matt. And then those good looks of yours caught the eye of that bookmaker's girl, and he gave you a job at writing sheet—and you worked me in with you."

So long ago it seemed, yet near and real, too, as I sat there, conscious of every sound and motion, even of the fantastic shapes taken by our upcurling smoke. How far I was from the "rail bird" of those happy—so lucky years, when a meal meant quite as much to me as does a million now—how far from all that, yet how near, too. For was I not still facing life with the same careless courage, forgetting each yesterday in the eager excitement of each new day with its new deal? We went on in our reminiscences for a while; then, as Joe had a little work to do, I drifted out into the house, took a bite of supper with young Melville, had a little go at the tiger, and toward five in the clear June morning emerged into the broad day of the streets, with the precious bundle under my arms and a five hundred dollar bill in my waistcoat pocket.

"Give my win to me in a single bill," I said to the banker, "and blow yourself off with the change."

Joe walked down the street with me for companionship and a little air before turning in, he said, but I imagine a desire to keep his eye on his treasure a while longer had something to do with his taking that early morning stroll. We passed several of those forlorn figures that hurry through the slowly-awakening streets to bed or to work. Finally, there came by an old, old woman—a scrub-woman, I guess, on her way home from cleaning some office building. Beside her was a thin little boy, hopping along on a crutch. I stopped them.

"Hold out your hand," said I to the boy, and he did. I laid the five hundred dollar bill in it. "Now, shut your fingers tight over that," said I, "and don't open them till you get home. Then tell your mother to do what she likes with it." And we left them gazing after us, speechless before this fairy story come true.

"You must be looking hard for luck to-day," said Joe, who understood this transaction where another might have thought it a showy and not very wise charity. "They'll stop in at the church and pray for you, and burn a candle."

and in England. There was the stock I had been buying since the exchange opened—buying at figures ranging from one-eighth above last night's closing price to fourteen points above it. And, on the debit side, there were over a period of nearly two months—"sellings" of blocks large and small at a hundred different prices.

An inextricable tangle, you will say, one it would be impossible for a man to unravel quickly and in the frantic chaos of a wild stock exchange day. Yet the influence of the mysterious state of my nerves, which I have described above, was so marvelous that, incredible though it seems, the moment the exchange closed, I knew exactly where I stood.

Like a mechanical lightning calculator, my mind threw up before me the net result of these selling and buying transactions. Textile common closed eighteen points above the closing quotation of the previous day; if Langdon's brother had not been just a little indiscreet, I should have been as hopeful as a bankrupt in reputation and in fortune as ever was ripped up by the bulls of Wall street.

As it was, I believed that, by keeping a bold front, I might extricate and free myself when the coal reorganization was announced. The rise of coal stocks would square my debts—and, as I was apparently untouched by the textile flurry, so far as even Ball, my nominal partner and chief lieutenant, knew, I need not fear pressure from creditors that I could not withstand. I could not breathe freely, but I could breathe.

XX.
A BREATHING SPELL.

Langdon, after several years of effort, had got recognition for textile in London, but that was about all. He hadn't succeeded in unloading any great amount of it on the English. So it was rather because I neglected nothing than because I was hopeful of results that I had made a point of telegraphing to London news of my proposed suit. The result was a little trading in textiles over there and a slight decline in the price. This fact was telegraphed to all the financial centers on this side of the water, and reinforced the impression my lawyers' announcement and my own "bear" letter were making.

Still, this was nothing, or next to it. What could I hope to avail against Langdon's agents with almost unlimited capital, putting their whole energy under the stock to raise it? In the same newspapers that published my bear attack, in the same columns and

in an effort he collected himself, drew me aside and said: "I owe you an apology, Mr. Blacklock. I went to the steamer with Mowbray to see him off, and he asked me to tell you about our new dividend rate—though it was not to be made public for some time. Anyhow, he told me to go straight to you—and I—frankly I forgot it." Then, with the winning, candid Langdon smile, he added, innocently: "The best excuse in the world—yet the one nobody ever accepts."

"No apology necessary," said I with the utmost good nature. "I've no personal interest in textile. My house deals on commission only, you know—never on margins for myself. I'm a banker and broker, not a gambler. Some of our customers were alarmed by the news of the big increase, and insisted on bringing suit to stop it. But I'm going to urge them now to let the matter drop."

Tom tried to look natural, and as he is an apt pupil of his brother's, he succeeded fairly well. His glance, however, wouldn't fix steadily on my gaze, but circled round and round like a bat at an electric light. "To tell you the truth," said he, "I'm extremely nervous as to what my brother will say—and do—to me, when I tell him. I hope no harm came to you through my forgetfulness."

"None in the world," I assured him. Then I turned on Sam. "What are you doing down town to-day?" said I. "Are you on your way to see me?" "Oh, I was just calling on Tom," he replied rather haughtily.

Then Melville himself came in, brushing back his white tufted burnside and licking his lips and blinking his eyes—looking for all the world like a cat at its toilet.

"Oh! ah! Blacklock!" he exclaimed, with purring cordiality—and I knew he had heard of the big deposit I was making. "Come into my office on your way out—nothing special—only because it's always a pleasure to talk with you."

I saw that his effusive friendliness confirmed Tom Langdon's fear that I had escaped from his brother's toils. He stared sullenly at the carpet until he caught me looking at him with twinkling eyes. He made a valiant effort to return my smile and succeeded in twisting his face into a knot that seemed to hurt him as much as it amused me.

"Well, good-by, Tom," said I. "Give my regards to your brother when he lands, and tell him his going away was a mistake. A man can't afford to trust his important business to under-strappers." This with a face free from any suggestion of intending a shot at him. Then to Sam: "See you to-night, old man," and I went away, leaving Lewis looking from one to the other as if he felt that there was dynamite about, but couldn't locate it. I stopped with Melville to talk coal for a few minutes—at my ease, and the last man on earth to be suspected of hanging by the crook of one finger from the edge of the precipice.

I rang the Ellersly's bell at half-past nine that evening. The butler faced me with eyes not down, as they should have been, but on mine, and full of servile insolence to which he had been prompted by what he had overheard in the family.

"Not at home, sir," he said, though I had not spoken.

I was preoccupied and not expecting that statement; neither had I skill, nor desire to acquire skill, in reading family barometers in the faces of servants. So, I was for brushing past him and entering where I felt I had as much right as in my own places. He barred the way.

"Beg pardon, sir," Mr. Ellersly instructed me to say no one was at home.

menace to all. Every year millions upon millions of dollars find their way from the towns, villages and rural districts of the country to the coffers of the mail order houses in the cities, and go to the upbuilding of enormous institutions in the centers of population. Naturally, the sources from which the contributions are made suffer accordingly.

Figures ever tell a better story than words. Here are figures which tell a story so stupendous that its full significance cannot be grasped in a moment, but the mere sight of which are awe inspiring:

In the year 1905 two mail order houses, located in Chicago, did a business amounting in round numbers to \$80,000,000. In the year 1904 these same concerns did a business of about \$62,000,000, a gain of \$18,000,000 or nearly 30 per cent. in a single year being thus exhibited.

These figures represent the sale last year of one dollar's worth of merchandise for every man, woman and child in the country by two catalogue houses alone, and those operating from the same central point. Dozens more of varying size and importance are operating all over the country from coast

to coast and from border to border. A fact not generally known is that hundreds of concerns throughout the country which now are doing business through the regular trade channels are awaiting only a parcels post law to unloose literature, already prepared in many instances, which would project them into the mail order field, and this does not take into account the hundreds and perhaps thousands of entirely new mail order concerns which inevitably would spring into existence under such friendly auspices.

The two Chicago institutions referred to, already occupying immense buildings, found themselves cramped for room. One of them expended not less than \$1,000,000, and probably more, for a new home. The other lately has secured a new location and also will expend at least \$1,000,000 for an immense new building.

Anyone who will reflect even casually on the subject must become impressed that the influence of the mail order business is toward the centralization of wealth, and how enormous a part it is playing in this direction will be understood from a second glance at the figures which have been given above.

It is due to himself that every patron of the mail order house should inquire honestly of himself what the final outcome is to be if the mail order business shall continue to make the great strides which have marked its progress during the last half decade.

It is useless to repeat the well worn argument of the mail order concern that they are selling goods cheaper than the merchants in the regular channels of trade to leave their customers more money than ever to devote to home enterprises and institutions. The fallacy of this statement has been proved over and over again by actual and minute comparisons of goods, as to their quality and prices. To refute it finally and indisputably by a simpler and more direct method it is necessary only to ask the reliable business men of any of the smaller communities to show the evidence from their books and accounts of the harm the mail order habit is doing their communities.

It is a truth as old as the hills and as certain as the rising and setting of the sun that no country or section of a country can prosper unless the people as a whole shall be prosperous. Such general prosperity as may exist cannot be retained if the institutions of the already larger and wealthier communities are to continue to be built up by contributions that should be spent at home from the thousands of smaller communities.

The need of the country, a desperate need upon which the welfare of the individual depends, is for the upbuilding and continued progress of the smaller communities, so that the wealth of the country may be distributed over the entire country, and not congested and controlled in large

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MENACE TO ALL

Giant Mail Order Concerns Are Sapping Country of Its Wealth.

SMALLER TOWNS CRUSHED

By Assisting in the Centralization of Wealth, Patrons of These Institutions Contribute to Their Own Injury.

(Copyright, 1906, by Alfred C. Clark.)

Every year millions upon millions of dollars find their way from the towns, villages and rural districts of the country to the coffers of the mail order houses in the cities, and go to the upbuilding of enormous institutions in the centers of population. Naturally, the sources from which the contributions are made suffer accordingly.

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The need of the country, a desperate need upon which the welfare of the individual depends, is for the upbuilding and continued progress of the smaller communities, so that the wealth of the country may be distributed over the entire country, and not congested and controlled in large

amounts in a comparative few centers of population.

Therefore, the man who sends away from his own community money which he might have spent at home and permitted a fair profit to the home merchant to be retained there for the benefit of the community, is injuring his community, and thereby the prospects, for his own future prosperity.

In a large number of instances he is doing more than this. Unwittingly, or, unthinkingly, perhaps, he is violating his own principles of right and justice, for, at the expense of his own community, he is needlessly contributing profits to the capitalistic combinations which he continuously cries out are menacing the country.

The mail order giants direct their energies particularly toward the people of the smaller towns and the agricultural districts. In hundreds of thousands of the homes of these the catalogue of the mail order house is as regularly received as the home paper. The man on the farm last year sent a very large portion of eighty millions of dollars to two of these institutions, in one community, alone.

In all sincerity we ask: Admitting, purely for the sake of the argument, that the farmer or the resident of the small community can save a few dollars on some of his purchases, or even that he could do so on all of them, can he afford to continue to impoverish his own community, upon which his own prosperity, the very value of his land depends?

If he will ask himself this question and consider it soberly and fairly in all of its phases, including the many which cannot be touched upon within the limits of a single article, we think his answer must be that he cannot.

The wonderful productivity of this country has been sufficient to overcome the various adverse economic influences which have existed during the period of years in which the mail order business has accomplished its

greatest growth. Everyone has been "getting along pretty well." While the increasing flow of golden millions from their source in the land of the country to the already great centers of money and population has held back the growth of the smaller communities, it has not yet occasioned a great disaster. The test will come with the first pinch of "hard times," a condition which no country ever has been able to escape at recurring intervals. When this time arrives those communities which best stand the test will have best conserved and husbanded their resources.

JOHN S. POTTS.
Historic Toy.

In Independence hall at Philadelphia there is preserved among notable revolutionary relics a quaint little doll dressed in the fashion of Louis XVI. Long before there was a United States this pretty Parisienne found her way over sea, carrying with her into William Penn's woodland a little of the folly and fashion of the old world, for she was not only a plaything, but the fashion plate of her time.

Can you picture to yourself the countless multitude of dolls that has followed in her way? In the last six months, for instance, Paris sent over to New York toys worth \$218,819—and over half of that sum was represented by dolls. In recent years France has lost a little of her supremacy in the toy market. She can no longer compete with Germany in homely toys—the trifles that are sold for a song; but in playthings of a finer sort she still holds her own. Not without effort, however, the local authorities of Paris offer tempting rewards for the invention of new toys.—Vance, Thompson, in Every-body's.

The Puzzle Solved.

Some time ago a merchant in Marblehead, Mass., was discovered in his store at a very late hour, and in reply to inquiries, he said: "My confidential clerk is missing."

"And what of it?"

"Why, I'm looking over the books, but they seem to be all right."

"Have you counted your cash?"

"Yes; and it is correct to a dollar."

"Looked over your bank book?"

"I have, and it is satisfactory. That's the puzzle, you see. He's skipped, and I can't make out what for."

Why He Liked It.

HIS "BIGGEST" NEWS STORY

The biggest story I ever ran across while connected with the New York press slept for 20 hours before a newspaper office in the big city had the slightest hint of it, and it was only 30 miles away," said Captain Oscar Harley, the other day. "About four years ago I was suburban reporter for several New York papers, and also for one of the leading papers of New Jersey, at Morristown. One afternoon a couple of county officials came in from Boonton, a village of 5,000, about ten miles from Morristown, and casually remarked that one Bill Hoar, a diver, had gone down into 60 feet of water to fix the sluice gates and had not come up. I telephoned Boonton and verified the information. There was a man in armor at the bottom of the reservoir, still alive, and 15,000 people standing on the banks watching him pull at the signal ropes, and not a newspaper in the land knew it. I went to the telegraph office on the jump and told the operator to connect me with every newspaper office in New York city. Surprised at such an order, he hesitated. Then I told him to call up the general manager in New York and I would explain. He did so and as soon as the manager understood the nature of the message he instantly gave me right of way. I shot in what I had and then took the next train for Boonton. Among the constantly increasing throng on the banks were the editors of two daily newspapers at Boonton, and they said they were waiting until the man came up before wiring their story! They were correspondents for the city press just the same as I was.

When my message reached New York it created excitement in all the offices, you may believe. A special train was chartered for the staff writers, and before daylight artists and reporters were busily at work at the unique scene. It was not the loss of a man's life that made it a great story; but the marvelous character of the situation. There was a man, yet alive, 60 feet below the surface of the water, spasmodically twitching a rope which we all could see and no way to help him.

A diver from New York went down and reported that Hoar's legs were pinned under a great wooden ball, loaded with lead, which he had been, trying to roll against the out-take pipe so as to stop the flow of water. For hours he had been compelled to rest his head on his arms to keep from drowning. The diver could not release him, but he put ropes under Hoar's body so as to relieve him from the painful position of holding his head with his arms.

A cable was lowered and attached around the unfortunate man's breast by the diver. Horses were at the other end and they tugged and tugged, but could not release Hoar from the ball which was pressing his legs against the out-take pipe. Then an engine was coupled to the cable and it broke the cable.

The crowd stayed night and day watching the uncanny scene. The ball could not be rolled off the prostrate man's legs on account of the tremendous force of the water that was pressing it against him. The only thing to do was to repair and shut the sluice gates, which was finally done, and Hoar was brought to the surface dead.

I made nearly \$500 out of the story, because having been first to report it my stuff was given eight-of-way and most of the work done on it was credited to me. One would think it hardly possible that such an item could remain unknown to the world for 20 hours in a populous district like northern New Jersey, but that was the actual case. The country newspaper men who were on the scene were so deeply interested in the peculiar situation that none of them recalled their position as newspaper correspondents. They were printing, of course, in their little dailies detailed accounts of the affair as it progressed, but none of them seemed to grasp the significance of the story for the daily press.

But after the newsboys got into the game they made Bill Hoar, who nobody knew a week before, the most famous man for the time being on the American continent.

Also a Critic.

Sir Henry Irving, the English actor, once wanted a white horse to use in one of his scenes, but no white horse that was suitable could be got. At last, the London Globe tells the story, a stage hand advised him to apply to a certain distinguished actor-manager, who he said, had such a horse.

Sir Henry visited the owner, inspected the horse, and the bargain was concluded, but as an afterthought Sir Henry said he trusted the animal was not fractious.

"Not at all, Sir Henry, I assure you; an excellent horse in every way. Why, I rode him night after night, and all I had to complain of was that he would occasionally yawn when I was on the stage."

"Indeed," said Sir Henry, "a bit of a critic, then, evidently."

Unprogressive Men of War.

The war office has long been proverbial for its discouragement of inventors in general, but they seem to reserve a special brand of H treatment for an inventor who is unlucky enough to wear a soldier's coat. Gen. Shrapnell, the inventor of the formidable projectile which bears his name to this day, died a poor man after spending thousands of pounds on his invention.—London Regiment.

Why He Liked It.

"How do you like our change from small to large type on the editorial page?" the editor inquired of the patron who had just brought in a year's subscription.

"I like it," replied the patron. "There ain't so much of it."

Food Inspectors Kept Busy.



"HOW DID YOU COME OUT?" SHE ASKED EAGERLY.

under the same head-lines, were official denials from the textile trust and the figures of enormous increase of business as proof positive that the denials were honest. If the public had not been burned so many times by "industrials," if it had not learned by bitter experience that practically none of the leaders of finance and industry were above lying to make or save a few dollars, if textiles had not been manipulated so often, first by Dumont and since his death by his brother-in-law and successor, this snave and cynical Langdon, my desperate attack would have been without effect. As it was—

Four months before, in the same situation, had I seen textiles stagger as they staggered in the first hour of business on the stock exchange that morning, I'd have sounded the charge, clapped spurs to my charger, and borne down upon them. But—I had my new-born yearning for "respectability;" I had my new-born squeamishness, which led me to fear risking Bob Corey and his bank and the money of my old friend Healey; finally, there was Anita—the longing for her that made me prefer a narrow and uncertain foothold to the bold leap that would land me either in wealth and power or in the bottomless abyss.

Instead of continuing to sell textiles, I covered as far as I could, and I bought so eagerly and so heavily that, more than Langdon's corps of rocketers, I was responsible for the stock's rally and start upward. When I say "eagerly" and "heavily" I do not mean that I acted openly or without regard to common sense. I mean simply that I made no attempt to back up my followers in the selling campaign. I had urged them into it; on the contrary, I bought as they sold. That does not sound well, and it is no better than it sounds. I shall not dispute any one who finds this action of mine a betrayal of my clients to save myself. All I shall say is that it was business, that in such extreme and dire compulsion as was mine, it was—and is—right under the code, the private and real Wall street code.

You can imagine the confused mass of transactions in which I was involved before the stock exchange had been open long. There was the stock we had been able to buy or get options on at various prices, between the closing of the exchange the previous day and that morning's opening—stock from all parts of this country

Tales About London Bridge.

Combination of Odd Stories in Regard to the Ancient Structure.

From the Westminster Gazette.—It is believed that in early Roman times there was a bridge of boats over the Thames. This gave place to a strong, narrow structure built by the Roman occupiers on wooden piles. The remains of this Roman bridge were discovered when the present bridge was built. The Roman bridge was burned in 1126, but was repaired.

In 1167 the Norman London bridge was begun by Peter, rector of Colechurch, in the reign of Henry II. It was not completed until 1209, a period of 42 years. In 1282 there was a terrible fire on the bridge, both ends burning furiously, while 3,000 persons were caught between the two fires and either burned to death or drowned.

In the fifteenth century there were houses on both sides of the bridge, just as there are on the Ponte Vecchio in Florence at the present time. In Tudor times the heads of political offenders were stuck over the gates of the bridge. One traveler has recorded the fact that he witnessed no fewer than 300 of these terrible trophies impaled at various parts of London bridge.

In the days of James I. the bridge had become the haunt of jewel