

FRIDAY, THE 13th

By Thomas W. Lawson

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CHAPTER V.—Continued.

Whether it was that for the first time in all his wonderful career he realized that the "system" was to meet its Nemesis, or what the cause, none could tell, perhaps not even Barry Conant himself, but some emotion caused his olive face for an instant to turn pale, and give his voice a tell-tale quiver. Once more pealed forth "25 for 5,000." That Bob saw the pallor, that he caught the quiver, was evident to all, for the instant his "sold" rang out, he followed it with 5,000 at 24, 23, 22, 20. Neither Barry Conant nor any of his lieutenants got in a "take it," although whether they wanted to or not was an open question until Bob allowed his voice to dwell just like a pendulum swing of time on the 20. It was as if he were tantalizing them into sticking by their guns. By the time he paused, Barry Conant's nerve was back, for his piercing "Take it" had linked to it "20 for any part of \$10,000." The bid was yet on his lips when Bob's deep voice rang out "Sold." Any part of 27,000 at 19, 18, 15, 10. Hell was now loose. Back and forth, up against the rail, around the room and back and around again, the crowd surged for 15 of the wildest, craziest minutes in the history of the New York stock exchange, a history replete with records of wild and crazy scenes.

At last from sheer exhaustion there came a ten minutes' lull, which was used in comparing trades. At the beginning of the respite Sugar was selling at 155, for in that quarter hour of madness it had broken from 210 to 155, but when the ten minutes had elapsed, the stock had worked back to 167. Barry Conant had again taken the center of the crowd, after hastily scanning the brief notes handed him by messenger-boys and giving orders to his lieutenants. He had evidently received reinforcements in the form of renewed orders from his principals. Many of the faces that fringed the inner circle of that crowd were frightful to look upon, some white as though just lifted from hospital pillows, others red to the verge of apoplexy—all strained as though awaiting the coming of the jury with a life or death verdict. "They all knew that Bob had sold more than a hundred thousand shares of Sugar upon which the profits must be more than \$4,000,000. Would he resume selling, or was he through? Was it short stock, which must be bought back, or long stock; and if long, whose stock? Were the insiders selling out on one another, or were they all selling together, and under cover of Barry Conant's movements were Camemeyer and "Standard Oil" emptying their bag preparatory to the slaughter of the Washington contingent? All these questions were rushing through the heads of that crowd of brokers like steam through a boiler, now hot, now cold, but always at high pressure, for upon the correctness of the answer depended the fortune of many who breathlessly awaited the renewal or the suspension of the contest. Even Barry Conant's usually impassive face wore a tinge of anxiety.

Indeed, Bob was the only one in the center of that throng that showed no sign of what was going on behind it. The same cynical smile that had been there since the opening still played around the corners of his mouth as he squared himself in front of his opponent. All knew now that he was not through. Barry Conant had evidently decided to force the fighting, although more cautiously than before. "67 for a thousand." One of his lieutenants bid 67 for 500, another 67 for 300, and as Bob had not yet shown his intention of meeting their bids, 67 for different amounts was heard all over the house. Bob might have been tossing a metal coin to decide the advisability of buying back what he had sold; he might have been adding up the bids as they were made. He said nothing for a fraction of a minute, which to those tortured men must have seemed like an age. Then with a wave of his hand, as though delivering a benediction, he swept the circle with a cold-blooded: "Sold the lots. 5,600 in all."

"Sixty-seven for a thousand"—again Barry Conant's bid. "Sold." "67 for 5,000." "Sold." "66 for a thousand." "Sold." The drop from 5,000 to 1,000 and a dollar a share in Barry Conant's bids was the mortally wounded, but still game general's "Sound the Retreat." Bob heard it. "Any part of 10,000 at 65, 64, 62, 60." The din was now as fierce as before. The entire crowd, all but Barry Conant and his

lieutenants, seemed to have concluded that Bob's renewal of attack meant that he was the winning side, and those who had been hanging on to their stock hoping against hope, and those who were short and had been undecided whether to cover or to hold on and sell more for greater profits, vied with one another in a frantic effort to sell. All could now feel the coming panic. All could see that it was a bad one, as the least informed on the floor knew that there was a tremendous amount of Sugar stock in the hands of Washington novices at speculation and of others who had bought it at high prices. Sugar was now dropping two, three, five dollars a share between trades, and the panic was spreading to the other poles, as is always the case, for when there are sudden large losses in one stock, the losers must throw over the other stocks they hold to meet their loss, and thus the whole structure tumbles



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like a house of cards. Sugar had just crossed 110 when the loud bang of the president's gavel resounded through the room. Instantly there was a silence as of death. All knew the meaning of the sound, the most ominous ever heard in a stock exchange, calling for the temporary suspension of business while the president announces the failure of some member or house.

PERKINS, BLANCHARD & CO. Announce that They Cannot Meet Their Obligations.

This statement that one of the oldest houses had been swamped in the crash Bob had started caused further frantic selling, and, as though every member had employed the lull to refill his lungs, a howl arose that pealed and waited to the dome.

I watched Bob closely; in fact, it was impossible for me to take my eyes off him; he seemed absolutely unmindful of the agonizing shrieks about him, for the frenzied brokers were no longer crying their bids or offers, but screaming them. He still continued relentlessly to hammer Sugar, offering it in thousands and tens of thousand lots.

Again and again the gavel fell, and again and again an announcement of failure was followed by blood-curdling howls. When Sugar struck 80—not 180, but plain 80—it seemed that the last day of stock speculation was at hand. Announcements were being made every few minutes of the failure of this bank, the closing of the doors of that trust company. Where would it end? What power could stop this Niagara of molten dollars? Suddenly

above the tumult rose Bob Brownley's voice. He must have been standing on his tiptoes. His hands were raised aloft. He seemed to tower a head above the mob. His voice was still clear and unimpaired by the terrible strain of the past two hours. To that mob it must have sounded like the trumpet of the delivering angel. "80 for any part of 25,000 Sugar." Instantly Sugar was hurled at him from all sides of the crowd. He was the only buyer of the moment who had appeared since Sugar broke 125. Barry Conant and his lieutenants had disappeared like snowflakes at the opening of the door of the firebox of a locomotive speeding through the storm. In a few seconds Bob had been sold all the 25,000 he had bid for. Again his voice rang out: "80 for 25,000." The sellers momentarily halted. He got only a few thousand of his 25,000 for 25,000." A few thousand more, "90 for 25,000." Still fewer thousands. His bidding was beginning to tell on the mob. A cry ran through the room into the crowds around the poles: "Brownley has turned!"—and taking renewed courage at the report, the bulls rallied their forces and began to bid for the different stocks, which a moment before it had seemed that no one wanted at any price.

In a chip of a minute the whole scene changed; there was almost as wild a panic on the up side as there had been on the down. Bob Brownley continued buying Sugar until he had pushed it above 150. He then went about tallying up his trades. At the end of ten minutes' calculation he returned to the center and bought 11,

ago. You have three millions, and I have seven. Now there is nothing more but for you to go home to your father, and then come back to me. Back to me, Beulah, back to me to be my wife!"

He stopped. There was no sound. I waited; then, frightened, I stepped to the door of Beulah Sands' office. Bob was standing just inside the threshold, where he had halted to give her the glad tidings. She had risen from her desk and was looking at him with an agonized stare. He seemed to be transfixed by her look, the wild ecstasy of the outburst of love yet mirrored in his eyes. She was just saying as I reached the door:

"Bob, in mercy's name tell me you got this money fairly, honorably."

Bob must have realized for the first time what he had done. He did not speak. He only stared into her eyes. She was now at his side.

"Bob, you are unnerved," she said; "you have been through a terrible ordeal. For an hour I have been reading in the bulletins of the banks and trust companies that have failed, of the banking houses that have been ruined. I have been reading that you did it; that you have made millions—and I knew it was for me, for father, but in the midst of my joy, my gratitude, my love—for, oh, Bob, I love you," she interrupted herself passionately; "it seems as though I love you beyond the capacity of a human heart to love. I think that for the right to be yours for one single moment of this life I would smilingly endure all the pains and miseries of eternal torture. Yes, Bob, for the right to have you call me yours for only while I heard the words, I would do anything, Bob, anything that was honorable."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NOT ALL A COMPLIMENT.

Wife's Pride in Husband's Success Had a Tinge of Regret.

The doctor and his wife had lived together four years. She was a widow when he met her. He was a physician of note. Their life together was a happy one and no quibbling had entered the home to set a bad example for their hopeful. But the wife had a reputation as a wit. Her witticisms and little sarcastic remarks were known far and wide. Her friends had all heard of them. They had all felt the sting of them. The physician had been working with a hard case. He had spent day and night at the home of his patient and had won the fight for life. And he was accordingly well satisfied with himself. On his arrival home one evening he turned to his wife, saying: "You see, wifey dear? I have pulled my patient through. He is now well on the road to recovery." "Yes, hubby, dear," returned the wife. "But you are such a perfect master of your profession. You are so successful. Ah, I wish that I had met you five years sooner than I did. Then my poor, dear Billy would never have died."

CLEVER TRICK OF THIEVES.

Use Offensive Odor of Onions to Aid in Shoplifting.

"Incredible as it may seem," said Lecoq the detective, "there are a number of shoplifters who steal by the agency of the onion. These abandoned men, before setting out upon their contemplated crimes, eat of raw onions abundantly. Then they stroll into the silversmith's or the haberdasher's or the jeweler's that they propose to rob. 'Show me those large solitaires surrounded with pigeon-blood rubies, please,' says the jeweler thief. The clerk brings forth the tray of gems and, bending over it, the thief sighs with admiration. His face close to the clerks, he sighs again. And the clerk's nostrils quiver and he turns away his head. The inspection of diamonds continues for some minutes. Throughout it the thief keeps breathing hard, the clerk keeps turning his head away and hence it is no wonder at the day's end that a couple of costly rings are missing."

First Requisite for Success.

At the annual convention of salesmen of a large corporation prizes were to be awarded to those who submitted the best reply to the query: "What are you going to do to increase your sales for the ensuing year?" After numerous comments and remarks had been made, a telegram was received from the one absent salesman whose attendance had been unavoidably prevented by pressure of business. On being read to the assembly he was unanimously voted first prize. The telegram read: "Shall hustle like the dickens."

An Ambassador's Butler.

The practice of tipping is not entirely bad; the recipients at least derive some benefit. A former butler of Mr. Choate, American ambassador to England before Mr. Reid, has built a large hotel on the coast on the tips he received from visitors to the American embassy, whose servants make more money than those attached to other embassies, chiefly because of the number of wealthy Americans who visit the ambassador and scatter tips with traditional generosity.

FIGHT FOR FRANCE

SOLDIERS OF FOREIGN LEGION HAVE GLORIOUS RECORDS.

All Nationalities and Types Serve Under the Tri-Colored Flag in the Colonies of the Great European Republic.

In the bloody hand-to-hand fight with the Moors over the dead body of their commanding officer, Major Prevost, the men of the French Foreign Legion were true to the organization's record for gallantry.

Miscellaneous fighting in the French colonies has been the Legionaries' specialty. They campaigned against the Black Flags and filled hundreds of alien graves in Tonkin. In Dahomey 800 of the Legionaries bore the brunt of the fighting and earned Gen. Doud's praise as "the best soldiers in the world." By tradition they never serve in France. One of their most brilliant achievements, however, was the defense of the bridge in the first battle of Orleans in 1870, where fewer than 1,000 men held an entire Prussian army corps at bay and made it possible for the French army to retreat without serious loss and save its artillery. The Legion lost 500 men in the action.

Into the two infantry regiments drifts a steady stream of plain soldiers, bankrupt adventurers, fugitives from justice, political refugees, genteel blacklegs in disgrace, men of title and men of no account, ready to march 30 kilometres a day under the flaming African sun, so they can lose their identity. It is a brigade of mystery and romance.

In one company some years ago were found a Roumanian prince suspected of having murdered his brother; an Italian cavalry officer, dismissed from ecclesiastical functions for the best of reasons; an English ex-major of Hussars and a German count who had held high military rank at Berlin. After a terrible engagement with the Kabyles, in which both the surgeon-major and his assistant were killed, no one was left to care for the wounded. "Assembly" was sounded, and riding along the line the major asked, "Any doctors or surgeons among you?" Nine men left the ranks, each of whom had taken his degree in a European university.

A hard-drinking, quarrelsome, dueling, devil-may-care lot of social castaways and professional soldiers, the Legionaries are ruled with iron discipline. The slightest act of aggression against a superior officer is punished with death. During the war in Tonkin 17 members were court-martialed and shot in one day. But in the face of danger, whatever their vices or their crimes, the wearers of the smart kepi and baggy red breeches never fail to give a good account of themselves. They are always ready and eager to fight. Men like Marshal Bazaine, Gen. de Negrier and Gen. Dupin have led them. Count de Maleret, a court favorite in Napoleon III's time, having been disgraced for life, sought their command. Villebois-Mareuil, who fought with the Boers, was once an officer in the Legion.

"Buttons" Retorts.

The stingy guest was very much irritated.

"So they call you 'Buttons,' eh?" he said sarcastically. "Well, you have so much brass they should call you 'Brass Buttons.'"

The bellboy held out his palm.

"Why don't you tip me with a quarter, boss," he said solemnly, "and then they would call me 'Silver Buttons.'"

A Strange Requirement.

"What a man who wishes to run an automobile needs most," said the experienced chauffeur, "is good horse sense."

Nothing Doing.

Harrison Grey Fiske discussed at a dinner in New York the art of acting.

"I believe," said Mr. Fiske, "in subtlety and restraint. A nod, a shake of the head, a silent pause—these things are often more effective than the most violent yelling and ranting."

"Life is like that, subtle and silent. What, for instance, could be more expressive than this scene, a scene without a spoken word, that I once witnessed in the country?"

"An undertaker stood on a corner near a noble mansion. He elevated his brows hopefully and inquiringly as a physician came from the house. The physician, compressing his lips, shook his head decidedly and hurried to his carriage. Then the undertaker with a sigh passed on."

Results Are the Same.

Singleton—A scientist claims that drinking too much coffee will eventually make a man bald.

Wedderly—Yes; and telling his wife that her coffee is "slop" produces the same result.