

WON AT LAST

By Bernard Bigsby.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

CHAPTER III.
THE GREAT NIGHT SCHOOL OF ORETOWN.
Mr. Commissioner Eaton, in his elaborate reports from the Washington bureau of education, condescended not to notice the night school of Oretown. Yet here was a great and curious factor in the educational elements of the country.

Inside the gaunt building were gathered some hundred miners, chiefly English and Swedes, with here and there a native American. They were formed into classes, some spelling in ponderous earnestness easy words, some wrestling manfully with the mysteries of arithmetic, some laboriously poring over the page of a primer, and some compelling their unpliant fingers to guide a pen over the mazy page of a child's copybook, but all strangely and stertily in earnest.

Eight or ten teachers were scattered around the room. They were miners, who had little learning, or who had themselves been pupils of the school. One was exceptional.

He was a broad-shouldered, strong, athletic fellow, better dressed than the



"ME AND TOM BINGHAM HAS GOT THE SACK."

rest, but rough and uncouth in his manner. This man, Jack Wilders, was Frank Grey's mainstay, or, as he himself styled it, "the professor's right bower."

Jack was by profession a "prospector," who had traveled in the service of the companies every acre of that wild region in search of ore, and having invested his hard-won wages most advantageously, now found himself at thirty-five years of age in an independent position.

Jack was no sybarite. He was a hard drinker and a rough liver, but down in the depths of his heart was a refining spot that leavened his whole nature—an intense love for his little bright-eyed wife and his curly-headed boy of five years. It was through an accident that befell this latter idol of his affection that, to use his own words, he "caught on" to the schoolmaster.

One day little Willie Wilders was attacked by a big angry cur belonging to Wixon, when Grey, who happened to be passing, came to the rescue, and saved the child from anything worse than a wound in the leg. While the little sufferer lay crying on his bed the father, all tenderness, was his constant nurse. He never left the child's couch, save when, gun in hand, he went to Wixon's house and shot the dog dead on his master's doorstep.

From that day Wilders was Grey's friend. That was how he came to be vice-principal of the Oretown night school.

Usually when the exercises were over the men departed quietly, but this night they remained in their seats, and when Grey looked inquiringly, and old greybeard rose and said:

"Mr. Grey an' mates: Me and Tom Bingham has got the sack, an' for no other reason than because we told Capt. Wixon we warn't goin' to leave off tending this here school, an' we wor agoin' to vote the republican or the democratic ticket, just as we set our fancies, on 'em."

"There must be some mistake," Grey said, rising hurriedly and speaking nervously. "Capt. Wixon cannot have understood our efforts, and as for attempting to restrain in this free and enlightened country the liberty of a man's conscience, his political birth-right, his—"

But a roar of bantering laughter stayed the speaker's eloquence. "Boys, listen to me." It was Wilders who spoke now. "I've been watching the run of things for some time, and I've come to the conclusion that we've got to have a change. It was bound to come. They don't want no light of education let into this region. They don't want no brains. They want strong arms an' stout loins as will toil an' get money for them. They'll do all the thinking for you. They appoint their own township and county officers, they own the newspapers, they send one of themselves to congress, and if some poor devil of a minister, as sometimes happens, dares to open his lips against the system, he quickly finds his supplies cut off. Now, what are you going to do about it?"

Just at this moment a knock came to the door, and a boy handed a letter to Grey, who, casting his eyes over it, seemed for the moment lost in thought. "My friends," he said, after a moment's reverie, "I hold in my hand here a letter from the proprietor of this building giving me notice to quit possession on Wednesday next, though our

agreement stipulated for three months' notice—and saying that, if he had known we were going to teach communism, he would never have let it to us. What does it mean? If we have taught communism, it has been from the text books these very men have placed in the hands of your little ones."

"It means," roared the prospector, as he smote with mighty hand the desk before him, "that you shall grovel in your ignorance all the days of your lives, and that the bosses of Oretown won't have nothing that interferes with their running things their way and doing all your thinking for you."

A growl of discontent rang round the room, and more than one rough orator rose in clamorous protest, but the schoolmaster, with a wave of his hand, stilled them, and said sternly:

"My friends, let us make haste slowly. Let us deliberate before we express ourselves."

"That's so!" cried the prospector. "Then to put things into shipshape, I move that we meet again on Monday night to discuss the question."

A unanimous "Aye! aye!" settled the matter, and the meeting dispersed.

"Before you go," said Wilders to Grey, "I have a word to say. Have you counted the cost? Sitting square down on a hornet's nest won't be a circumstance to the fix you'll find yourself in, if you go ahead in this business."

"I shall do my duty."

"Well, I'm with you."

"But, Jack, I am assured that you exaggerate the state of affairs. It is incredible that such tyranny can exist in this free land."

"Why, bless your innocent heart, this free and independent country is full of spots as unwholesome as this cesspool of an Oretown. When capital gets labor by the throat, justice squeals."

"What a grand lot would be his who had the power of tongue and pen to redden this mass of corruption," Grey said, with a hungry look in his eyes.

Wilders grinned.

"Not a bad move, I see. Start a paper, go on the stump, give the monopolies an all-fired raking out, and you'll end in a trip to Washington and a hatful of greenbacks."

"You mistake me."

"Not I—you're green now, but if you hang on to politics, you'll soon get your eyes skinned."

"I will study this great problem of social life, and balance my actions by reading the experiences of the great leaders of modern thought."

"And you've made up your mind to raise Cain in Oretown?"

"I have counted the cost. Dear friend, good night."

CHAPTER IV. WISE MEN IN COUNCIL.

"You are requested to be present at a meeting of the board of education to be held in the First ward school this evening at seven o'clock."
PETERGREW WIXON.

"Moderator."

A weak-eyed young woman, a daughter of Wixon's foreman, handed the young schoolmaster this missive as soon as the day's session was begun. This girl, Susan Green, was one of Grey's oldest scholars, and certainly his most troublesome one. In the early advent of the handsome teacher, she had done her poor best to attract his admiration, and, having failed, had imbibed a dislike to him that amounted to rabid hatred.

Grey read Wixon's letter and asked, quietly: "Did the captain desire an answer?"

"No, he didn't."

The schoolmaster did not condescend to notice the insolence of the girl's tone, though the other pupils looked at each other in mute surprise.

"Well," he said, "you can tell him at dinner time that I will be there."

"You can carry your own messages," the girl said in loud aggressive accents.

The young schoolmaster gave a glance of pained surprise and ordered her to leave the room, which she did with as much noise as it was possible for her to make.

When the dreary morning's work was over, Grey sat brooding upon this unaccountable trouble, which, to a man of his sensitive nature, was more than a mere passing annoyance.

Presently a hand touched him on the shoulder and aroused him from his reverie.

"Elsie!" he cried, reprovingly. "Why, my dear child, have you not gone home with the other girls?"

Out of doors was a sprinkling of rain, and Elsie had donned a long cloak, whose blue hood formed a picturesque frame for her exquisite features.

Even Frank Grey was struck with the loveliness and youthful freshness of the fair face turned up to his so pleadingly.

The round, pansy eyes were moist with tears, the lips were trembling, and she spoke hurriedly with much emotion.

"Dear Mr. Grey, do not be worried about Susan. I could not go without saying to you that I—that is all the girls in my class are ashamed of her conduct to you. That I—that is they, are very sorry for you, and—"

"Nay, Elsie," replied the teacher with much tenderness, "it is not on Susan's account only that I am troubled to-day. Other things are weighing on my spirits. Thank you very much for your sympathy. Go home now. I will follow you presently."

"Then you have other troubles and I do not know them," there was a world of emotion in her tones. "Why is there

so much trouble? We were so happy; and now—oh, sir," she broke out passionately, "will anything happen that will cause you to leave Oretown?" "I hardly think so. I do not know," he said, looking at the girl with a strange new-born interest.

"Oh, dear Mr. Grey, what should I do if you were to go away and leave me, and I should never see you again? What would become of me?"

In the passion of her appeal, while the tears were streaming down her sweet face, the child had grasped his hand in both her own.

Ere Grey could reply, he saw, to his utter discomfiture, that they were not alone. Standing in the doorway but a few yards from him was the portly figure of Capt. Wixon, and beside him posed the man he had seen on the hill by the lake.

No sound had heralded their approach. A deep blush of vexation mounted to the cheek of the schoolmaster, as he bade the girl leave him and turned haughtily to receive his visitors.

With a sinister grin on his countenance Wixon came forward and abruptly introduced Rev. Archibald Dodd, a gentleman interested in schools.

The minister had not an imposing presence. Short, squat in figure, ill-dressed in a suit of rusty black, with a fringe of red whiskers illuminating a coarse face, he seemed but ill suited to adorn a pulpit.

Bowing coldly to the two men, and without giving them time for further address, Grey left the building.

That night the board of education met, and after the dispatch of some minor preliminaries, the worthy president announced the principal business of the evening's session.

It was his painful duty, he said, to call the attention of the board to the fact that the principal of their schools was a man of evil repute and unfit to hold so responsible an office. This statement he substantiated by the following charges: First, That the intimacy existing between Mr. Grey and Miss Elsie Whitford, a pupil, had been matter of comment among the citizens for some months past. That he, Capt. Wixon, disbelieving these reports and actuated solely with a view to clear Mr. Grey's reputation, had engaged a much esteemed friend, Rev. Archibald Dodd, to prosecute inquiry, which had resulted in the painful conclusion that the principal was really guilty of at least great indiscretion.

Grey sat dumfounded at the very absurdity of the accusations, speechless with honest indignation.

"We will proceed to receive evidence," continued Wixon in judicial accents. "Call Miss Clarkson."

Gadsby, one of the directors and keeper of the store in Wixon's mine,

"The commotion subsided, Grey, as one in a dream, allowed his friend to lead him to a seat, the minister, who had fled at the first sign of violence, sneaked back to his place again, and Wixon resumed his magisterial functions.

"Jack Wilders," he said, "the laws of the state construe such conduct as yours a felony, but we will proceed, and attend to you later. Now, Susan Green, tell us what you know about this matter."

"Elsie and I have talked about sweethearts."

"Yes."

"She said she meant to go for Mr. Grey."

"Well, and she went for him, I suppose."

"You bet she did, sir. All the pupils have been talking about their carryings on."

"Carryings on?"

"Well, his favoring her, and her never taking her eyes off him. Oh, she's dead gone on him, that's certain. Then they're always talking and whispering together."

"Anything else?"

"No, I think not sir," and the amiable young lady was allowed to retire, Mr. Dodd whispering that she was a very reluctant witness, who knew a great deal more than she chose to tell.

"Now, Mr. Dodd will please speak."

"Gentlemen," said the reverend witness, "before I proceed to make the damaging statement I am about to do, I would suggest that Mr. Grey be given the opportunity to resign and go away in peace. If this were done the exposure might be avoided and the inquiry end here."

"What do you say to this, Mr. Grey?" asked Wixon.

"That I am only waiting to see what further infamy you and your tools are plotting," was the stern response.

"Mr. Dodd will proceed then."

This he accordingly did with greatunction.

"Happening to be in this neighborhood with idle hours on my hands," he declared, "Capt. Wixon interested me in the painful stories which were current concerning these young people, which at the time he believed to be without foundation, and I consented to sift the matter to the bottom. At first I was convinced that they were simply indiscreet."

He paused.

"And what led you to any other conclusion?"

"The evidence of my own eyes and ears."

The silence in the room was intense. "Yes, Mr. Moderator, my own unprejudiced observation. I myself have seen her in his room standing near the window with his arm around her. This very day, since preparing these charges, in company with Capt. Wixon, I found this couple in his class room alone. The girl was weeping and again and again crying in deep distress: 'Oh, what shall I do if you go away and leave me? What shall I do?' He paused impressively, and, turning to Grey, demanded: 'Can you deny this, young man?'"

A dead silence followed; even his friend the prospector eyed the schoolmaster doubtfully.

A deep flush dyed Grey's cheek. "The words are truly reported, the interpretation and tone of delivery false as perjury."

His explanation hung fire.

Wilders broke the oppressive silence by asking if he might question the minister.

"No," said Wixon. "Yes," said Edgerly, and finally he was allowed to appear as Grey's friend and adviser.

He addressed Mr. Dodd. "What church do you belong to, sir?"

"Oh, hev."

"Have you noticed any familiarity between them?"

"Zur?"

"Any sweetheating?"

"Zurely. He's sweet on her, an' her's sweet on he."

"Much together?"

"They be."

Mr. Dodd, who sat next to Wixon, waxed wroth at the man's slowness, and interrupted the examination by asking, fiercely:

"Why don't you speak out? What do you know about it, fellow?"

"O' knows nowt."

"Then, what did you come here for?"

"To arn thy ten dollars, was'nt the stoid response."

"Eh, what?" Mr. Edgerly, an old man of some property, and a member of the board, interrupted. "Who promised to give you ten dollars?"

"He did," pointing to Dodd, "said he'd give O' ten dollars, if O' proved owt agen the schulemeaster."

Mr. Dodd, hastily interjected: "Merely to compensate him for his loss of time," but the explanation fell flat.

The witness was excused.

Susan Green next appeared.

"Have you had any conversation with Miss Whitford concerning Mr. Grey?"

"Often, sir."

"Repeat what she has said."

"Please, sir, I don't like to, sir, it seems so like breaking confidence."

"My good girl," Wixon said paternally, "you must speak the truth. Your feelings do you credit. No harm can come to your young friend by repeating this conversation. It may be too late, but we want to shield her—"

"Infamous scoundrel!" Grey cried, leaping to his feet; but before he could reach the dastardly chairman, strong arms were wound around him.

"Take him out. Off with him," cried Wixon, foaming with passion. "We have shown him too much consideration by permitting his presence at all."

In vain Grey struggled, and his ejection was only a matter of moments, when an unexpected ally appeared and changed the aspect of affairs. Bonding from a seat in the gloomy background of the room, where he had been hitherto unobserved, came—came like an avalanche—the burly form of the prospector.

"Hands off, or by the Eternal, I'll be the death of some of you," and Grey stood free, for few men in Oretown cared to come to blows with Jack Wilders.

The commotion subsided, Grey, as one in a dream, allowed his friend to lead him to a seat, the minister, who had fled at the first sign of violence, sneaked back to his place again, and Wixon resumed his magisterial functions.

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"That is no business of yours," was the sullen response.

"Nevertheless," interposed Edgerly, "I think you should answer."

"Are you ashamed of it?" hotly continued Wilders. "Speak out, man. Are you a regular parson? Got your certificate? No bogus, and all that kind of thing?"

"Well, sir," stammered Dodd, in confusion, "I am not what you would call an ordained priest; we have no such mummies in our church."

"What is your church?"

"Well, the Hopkinsites. Our forms are based on the simple principles of the early disciples; to whom the spirit of teaching is given, he goeth out into the world and preacheth the truth."

"That will do. I guessed as much," sneered the prospector, as he took his seat, while the moderator hastily asked what steps the board would take in the matter.

"No immediate action," said Edgerly. "If Mr. Grey is guilty, he can resign his position without further scandal, as I understand the proceedings of this meeting are to be kept secret."

"That's it," interrupted Wixon; "the best possible course he can pursue. No fuss. Called away on urgent private affairs. Work too much for his constitution. Must have rest, and—"

"But," added Edgerly, "if he is innocent he is either the victim of unfortunate circumstantial evidence or of a deliberate plot to ruin him. In that case, let him stay and fight it out."

"Right you are, old boy," cried the prospector, wringing Edgerly's hand. "And you bet your bottom dollar, my man will stop to face the music."

The meeting was adjourned.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Commission Will Stay.

TOPEKA, Kan., Aug. 6.—Governor Morrill and Attorney General Dawes held a conference to-day and decided that the present police commission of Wichita should be retained and an assistant attorney general be appointed to aid them in enforcing the prohibitory law. It is understood that the appointment as assistant attorney general was offered to W. P. Campbell, ex-department commander of the G. A. R., but Mr. Dawes said this afternoon that matters were so unsettled that he could not say who the assistant attorney general would be.

Defender Wins Again.

NEW YORK, Aug. 7.—The Defender and Vigilant sailed over a 35 1/2 mile course yesterday, from Cottage City, Mass., to this port, the race being an event in the cruising of the New York Yacht club. The sea was smooth and the wind varied in velocity from ten to fifteen miles an hour. For twenty miles down to the Vineyard Sound lights it was a dead heat to windward and the Defender beat the Vigilant by about five minutes, forty-six seconds, both yachts carrying club topsails and baby jib topsails.

Messick Arrested for Forgery.

LIBERTY, Mo., Aug. 7.—Thomas F. Messick, the school director of the Liberty district who has embezzled about \$3,500 of the school funds, was arrested at his home shortly before 12 o'clock last night by Deputy Sheriff Ed Cave and taken before Justice Emerson. Preliminary examination was waved and bond was fixed at \$1,000 on each of the four charges of forgery and raising a warrant. To-day he is seeking bondsmen but so far in vain. He was a church leader.

PATRIOTIC PARITY.

The French People Will Not Tolerate Conspiracies to Injure the Government's Credit.

A great many people wonder why France is financially so prosperous. One of the reasons is that she is patriotic—and stands up for France.

In a late case before a French court a creditor had sued on a note payable in gold, and the court held the proviso void, on the ground that one sort of money issued by France was as good as another and to discriminate in favor of either one was a conspiracy to injure the government and its credit, and that the debtor has the right to pay in anything issued by law as money.

That doctrine—a sound and patriotic one—if enforced in this country, would bring Secretary Carlisle up with a round turn. There are no "fifty-cent" depreciators allowed in France—a five franc piece being as much money as a Napoleon. France makes her own money and makes an attempt to discredit it even in contracts a conspiracy at law. No wonder France is prosperous, as her lawmakers and her courts are as patriotic as her people. No high officers of state are there engaged in depreciating the money issued for the use of her people. It is morally a crime in the United States and ought to be held as an offense at law by our own courts—possibly will be so some day.—Kansas City Journal.

Judicial Tyranny.

Commenting on the fact that England, with 30,000,000 people, has only thirty judges of the first class, while Illinois, with 3,000,000, has 178, even the capitalistic Globe-Democrat is constrained to say that "we have made our judicial system a source of endless trifling with the interests of the people." Furthermore it declares that "we have so many judges and so many different tribunals that a case may be taken from one to another on various pretexts, and the expense is apt to exceed the amount involved in a majority of cases." Just so; and this is one of the indictments I bring against our plutocratic system. The justice that we are all taxed to pay for administering comes so high that a poor man can't afford it. I hardly expect to see the Globe-Democrat admit the truth of the charge, though.—Star.

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Big Silver Picnic, August 15

Senator Teller and Congressman J. F. Shoffreth of Denver, and Hon. W. J. Bryan and Senator Allen will address the people at Lincoln Park, August 15th. Excursion rates will be given by all railroads.

G A R National Encampment at Louisville, Ky.

The Burlington will on September 8th to 10th sell round trip tickets, via St. Louis, at \$18.35; via Peoria, \$19.35; via Chicago, \$20.40, good to return until September 25th. For full information apply at B. & M. depot or city office, corner 10th and O streets.

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Are you irritable and restless? Does your heart thump and cause you to gasp for breath after climbing a flight of stairs?

Does it distress you to lie on the left side?

Have you impaired memory, dimness of vision, depression of mind and gloomy forebodings?