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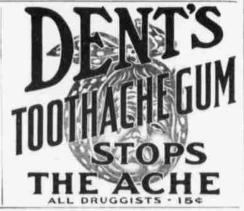
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The train gathered way. The rush of air increased. A hall of pelting grit began to sing round him, search-ing every inch of his body. The rattle, crash, and shriek of the wheels blended in a roar that stunned him, But still he clung on. His eyes were closed. The skin of his checkbones was stretched like a membrane. His nostrils were clogged with cinders and filled with the stench of hot oil from the journals. But he clung on. Crosswise in his fast-elenched teeth he held the bank-notes.

So, through the night, an inch from death, he rode. And in the gray light of the dawn he dropped from his place in the same city, in the same yards, almost in the same place where he had slipped into the box car half a day before.

Totteringly he crept out into the streets and set his face toward the business part of the town. His mind was made up. The wages of sin were death; who should know it better than he. He would go back and con-fess. Perhaps the bank might be merciful. Surely he had been punished enough. At any rate confession would save him from the charge of murder. His half-numbed brain failed to realize that the tragedy at the old jail would seem very clear to those who discovered the bodies of the giant and the hunchback, and that there was nothing to connect him with either death. He was going back. Jail seemed to him a haven of refuge.

The wait till the bank opened did not seem long. When nine o'clock struck he was the first to enter and go to the paying teller's cage.

He laid down the bank-notes, "I've brought them back," he said,

The teller picked up the notes curiously. Then a look of recognition came upon his face. "Heavens' But they're filthy," he exclaimed. "I guess they went through the fire all Where did you find them?

Ford's lips moved, but he said nothing audible. The teller looked at him curiously. "I was looking over them when the fire occurred, he began, "and-

"The fire!"
"Yes! Didn't you know we had a small fire here about three o'clock yesterday? I couldn't find them afterwards, and supposed they had blown out of the door. I was just wondering what I could say to the Secret Service men when they came after them at noon."

"The Secret Service men!"
"Yes!" The teller stopped. Light was dawning upon him. "Good Lord! You didn't think—Whew-oo! No!" he went on slowly, eyeing the cring-ing figure before him with pitying eyes. "They're not real. They're counterfeit. The Secret Service men brought them in for me to look over. They are coming for them at twelve o'clock. You've saved me a fot of embarrassment, Perhaps"-his hand went to his pocket doubtfully

Ford shook his head. Then he thrust his hand in his pocket and searched a little. At last he drew out the check that had taken him to the bank the afternoon before. "Could you cash this two-dollar check for me?" he asked plaintively. I - I need the money.

## The Bunk House Prisoner

(Continued from Page 4)

the pack mules were slow. Before dark he would be on the high road. and after that he could not lose his way. After all, perhaps it was better to reach Bleachers at night, and trust to rousing the one tavern of the

It was after midnight when his task was accomplished, and having seen to the accommodation of a very tired and hungry horse, Stranleigh threw himself upon the bed to which he was shown by a sleepy man. He had had quite enough equestrian exercise for one day.

Ten o'clock had struck next morning before he woke, and went down to breakfast. His mind was now clear as to what he meant to do. To avoid meeting Ricketts was impossi-ble; of that he was certain. His first object, then, was to draw a red herring across the trail, so he inquired from the hotel keeper the where-abouts of Ricketts' office, and was directed to it.

He crossed the street and ascended a stair. Ricketts kept neither clerk nor office-boy, so Stranleigh knocked at the door, and was gruffly commanded to enter.

SILAS A. RICKETTS was seated at a large table strewn with books and legal-looking documents, and he stared in astonishment at the figure which presented itself. He, like the men on the ranch, had never seen such a costume before.
"Are you Mr. Ricketts?" asked his

lordship.

I am, sir."

"My name is Stranleigh. I took the liberty of calling upon you to learn, if possible, the whereabouts of Stanley Armstrong.'

"Why should I know anything of his whereabouts?" demanded Rick-etts, still more gruffly.

Permit me to explain---

"Now, before we go any further," interrupted the lawyer, "I want you o know that this is a business office: I'm a business man, and my time is valuable. I thought when you came in that you were a client. If you have come here for gossip, I'm not your man. I have my own affairs to look after."

You state your case very clearly, Mr. Ricketts, and I congratulate your

clients. My own time is far from precious; I'm here for sport. me, just how valuable is your time? What is your fee for an hour's conference:

"It depends on the business transacted."

"I can't agree with you, Mr. Ricketts. An hour is an hour. I want to buy sixty minutes of your time and attention. What do you ask for

"Five dollars!" snapped Ricketts Stranleigh drew forth a five-dollar bill, and placed it on the table. "May I sit down? he inquired. "No

healthy man should be tired in the morning, but I had a long horseback ride yesterday, and an indifferent night's rest last night."

Where did you come from?" "I have been living for the past few days at Armstrong's ranch.

"Ah, you're the man that was shot a time back?"

"Yes; I was mistaken for your estimable sheriff, I understand. You see. I came from New York with a letter of introduction to Mr. Armstrong. I was told that I might enjoy good fishing and a little shooting, while Armstrong was described as a most admirable guide to these sports, I waited at the ranch day by day, hoping Armstrong would return, but nobody seems to know where he is, so I came out here, hoping to get into telegraphic communication with him. I'm well enough now to take part in the chase, and I don't like to return to New York without having had any sport."

"I still don't understand why you come to me about the matter," returned Ricketts, suspiciously.

I was told by his daughter that Armstrong had written you. She does not know in the least where he is, and so on the chance of your having received a recent letter, I have called to inquire."

"I see. Armstrong's letter to me was written from Chicago. It was a request for money. I had already loaned him a considerable sum, and was unable to meet his further demand. I answered to this effect, but have heard no more from him. You don't know the date of the last letter his own people received from him?"

'Yes: I have the letter with me,'