

The IRON TRAIL

BY REX BEACH

CHAPTER X.

O'Neill's Men Have Faith. O'Neill's talk with Mrs. Gerard upon her arrival from Hope was short and businesslike. Neither by word nor look did he show that he knew or suspected anything of the real reason of her break with Gordon. Toward both her and Natalie he preserved his customary haughtiness, and their first contact soon disappeared. Mrs. Gerard had been plunged in one of those black moods in which it seems that no possi-

ness. He was cool and calculating, but interference roused him to an almost insane pitch of passion. Fickle in most things, he was uncompromising in his hatreds. O'Neill's generosity in affording sanctuary to his defiant mistress struck him as a personal affront, and it fanned his dislike of his rival into a consuming rage. It was with no thought of profit that he cast about for a means of crippling O'Neill.

Dan Appleton entered the bungalow one evening, wet and tired from his work, to find Eliza pacing the floor in agitation.

"What's the matter, sis?" he inquired, with quick concern.

His sister pointed to a copy of the Review which that day's mail had brought.

"Look at that!" she cried. "Read it!"

"Oh, your story, eh?"

"Read it!"

He read a column and then glanced up to find her watching him with an angry eye.

"Gee, that's pretty rough on the chief, kid! I thought you liked him."

"I do! I do! Don't you understand dummy? I didn't write that. They've changed my story—distorted it. I'm furious!"

Dan whistled softly. "I didn't suppose they'd try anything like that, but they did a good job while they were at it. Why, you'd think O'Neill was a grafter and the S. R. and N. nothing but a land grabbing deal!"

"How dared they?" the girl cried.

"The actual changes aren't so many—just enough to alter the effect of the story—but that's what makes it so devilish. For instance, I described the obstacles and the handicaps Mr. O'Neill has had to overcome in order to show the magnitude of his enterprise, but Drake has altered it so that the physical conditions here seem to be insuperable, and he makes me say that the road is doomed to failure. That's the way he changed it all through."

"It may topple the chief's plans over. They're very insecure. It plays right into the hands of his enemies, too, and, of course, Gordon's press bureau will make the most of it."

"Heavens, I want sympathy, not abuse!" wailed his sister. "It's all due to the policy of the Review. Drake thinks everybody up here is a thief. I dare say they are, but how can I face Mr. O'Neill?"

Dan shook the paper in his fist. "Are you going to stand for this?" he demanded.

"Hardly. I cabled the office this morning, and here's Drake's answer."

"Stuff colorless. Don't allow admiration warp judgment. Can you beat that?"

"He thinks you've surrendered to Murray, like all the others."

"I hate him!" cried Eliza. "I detest him!"

"Who? O'Neill or Drake?"

"Both. Mr. O'Neill for putting me in the position of a traitor and Drake for promising to rewrite my staff. I'm going to resign, and I'm going to leave Omar before Murray/O'Neill comes back."

"Don't be a quitter, sis. If you throw up the job the paper will send somebody who will lie about us to suit the policy of the office. Show 'em what they're wrong; show 'em what this country needs. You have your magazine stories to write."

Eliza shook her head. "Both the magazines and the whole business! I'm thinking about Mr. O'Neill. I-I could cry. I suppose I'll have to stay and explain to him, but—then I'll go home."

"No! You'll stay right here and go through with this thing. I need you."

"You? What for?"

"You can perform a great and a signal service for your loving brother. He's in terrible trouble!"

"What's wrong, Danny? Eliza's anger gave instant place to solicitude. "You—you haven't stolen anything?"

"Lord, no! What put that into your head?"

"I don't know, except that's the worst thing that could happen to us. I like to start with the worst."

"I can't sulker in the jungle any more. I'm a bad loser, sis."

"Oh! You mean—Natalie? You—like her?"

"For a writer you select the most foolish words. Like, love, adore, worship—words are no good anyway. I'm dippy; I'm out of my head; I've lost my reason. I'm deliriously happy and miserably unhappy. I—"

"That's enough!" the girl exclaimed. "I can imagine the rest."

"It was a fatal mistake for her to come to Omar and to this very house every day. I might have recovered from the first jolt if I'd never seen her

again, but"—He waved his hands hopelessly. "I'm beginning to hate O'Neill."

"You miserable traitor!" gasped Eliza.

"Yep; that's me! I'm dead to loyalty; lost to the claims of friendship. I've fought myself until I'm black in the face, but it's no use. I must have Natalie."

"She's crazy about O'Neill."

"Seems to be for a fact, but that doesn't alter my fix. I can't live this way. You must help me or I'll lose my reason."

"Nonsense! You haven't any or you wouldn't talk like this. What can I do?"

"It's simple. Be nice to Murray and—aud win him away from her."

"Is that all? Just make him love me?"

Dan nodded. "That would be fine if you could manage it."

"Why—you—I— She gasped uncertainly for terms in which to voice her indignant surprise. "Idiot!" she finally exclaimed. "You simply can't be in earnest."

"I am, though." He turned upon her eyes, which had grown suddenly old and weary with longing.

"You poor, foolish boy! In the first place, Mr. O'Neill will hate me for this story. In the second place, no man would look at me, I'm ugly!"

"I think you're beautiful."

"With my snub nose and big mouth and—"

"You can make him laugh, and when a woman can make a fellow laugh the rest is easy."

"In the third place, I'm mannish and—vulgar, and besides—I don't care for him."

"Of course you don't, or I wouldn't ask it. You see, we're taking no risks. You can at least take up his attention, and—when you see him making for Natalie you can put out your foot and trip him up."

"It wouldn't be honorable, Danny."

"Possibly. But that doesn't make any difference with me. You may as well realize that I've got beyond the point where nice considerations of that sort weigh with me. If you'd ever been in love you'd understand that such things don't count at all. It's your chance to save the reason and happiness of an otherwise perfectly good brother."

"There is nothing I wouldn't do for your happiness—nothing. But—oh, it's preposterous!"

She continued to scout suggestions that she could help him by captivating O'Neill and stoutly maintained that she had no attraction for men. Nevertheless when she went to her room she examined herself critically in her mirror.

In the days before O'Neill's return she suffered constant misgivings and qualms of conscience, but the sight of her brother reviving, expanding, fairly bursting into bloom beneath the influence of Natalie Gerard led her to think that perhaps she did have a duty to perform.

She was greatly embarrassed nevertheless when she next met O'Neill and tried to explain that story in the Review. He listened courteously and smiled his gentle smile.

"My dear," she said finally, "I knew there had been some mistake, so let's forget that it ever happened. I brought you a little present."

Slowly she unwrapped the parcel and then with a gasp lifted a splendidly embroidered kimono from its box.

"Oh-h!" Her eyes were round and astonished. "Oh-h! It's for me!"

"It was a regal garment of heavy silk, superbly ornamented with golden dragons, each so cunning worked that it seemed upon the point of taking wing. "Why, their eyes glitter! And they'd breathe fire if I jabbed them! Oh-h!" she stared at the gift in helpless amazement. "Is it mine, honestly?"

He nodded. "Won't you put it on?"

"Over these things? Never!" Again Miss Appleton blushed, for she recalled that she had prepared for his coming with extraordinary care. Her boots were even stouter than usual, her skirt more plain, her waist more stiff and her hair more tightly smoothed back. "It would take a fluff of course to wear this. I'll always keep it, of course, and—I'll worship it, but I'm not designed for pretty clothes. I'll let Natalie wear it!"

"Natalie has one of her own done in butterfly and I brought one to her mother also."

"And you bought this for me after you had seen that fendish story over my signature?"

"Certainly." He quickly forestalled her attempted thanks by changing the subject. "Now, then, Dan tells me you are anxious to begin your magazine work, so I'm going to arrange for you to see the glaciers and the coal fields. It will be a hard trip, for the track isn't through yet, but—"

"Oh, I'll take care of myself! I won't get in anybody's way," she said eagerly.

"I intend to see that you don't by going with you. So make your preparations, and we'll leave as soon as I can get away."

When he had gone the girl said aloud:

"Eliza Violet, this is your chance. It's underhand and mean, but you're a mean person, and the finger of Providence is directing you." She snatched up the silken kimono and ran into her room, locking the door behind her. Hurriedly she put it on, then posed before the mirror. Next down came her hair amid a shower of pins. She arranged it loosely about her face and, ripping an artificial flower from her party hat, placed it over her ear. Then she swayed grandly to and fro while the golden dragons writhed and curved as if in joyous admiration. A dozen times she slipped out of the garment and, gathering it to her face, kissed it; a

dozen times she donned it, strutting about her little room like a peacock. Her tippled nose was red and her eyes were wet when at last she laid



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it out upon her bed and knelt with her cheek against it.

"Gee, if only I were pretty!" she sighed. "I almost believe he—likes me."

Tom Slater laboriously propelled himself up the hill to the bungalow that evening and seated himself on the topmost step near where Eliza was rocking. She had come to occupy a considerable place in his thoughts.

"Where have you been lately, Uncle Tom?" she began.

Slater winced at the appellation.

"I've been out on the delta hustling supplies ahead. Heard the news?"

"No."

"Curtis Gordon has bought the McDermott outfit in Kyak. He had a wild-cat plan to build a railroad from Kyak to the coal fields, but he never got farther than a row of alder stakes and a book of press clippings."

"Does that mean that Gordon abandons his Hope route?"

"Yep. He's swung in behind us and the Heidelbergans. Now it's a three-sided race, with us in the lead. Melien just brought in the news half an hour ago. He was on his way down from the glaciers when he ran into a field party of Gordon's surveyors. Looks like trouble ahead if they try to crowd through the canyon alongside of us."

Young Appleton came panting up the hill. "Goodby, sis," he said. "I'm off for the front in ten minutes."

"Anybody hurt?" Slater asked.

"Not yet, but somebody's liable to be. Gordon is trying to steal the canyon, and Murray has ordered me out with a car of dynamite to hold it."

"Dynamite! Why, Dan!" his sister exclaimed in consternation.

"We have poling boats at the lower crossing, and we'll be at the canyon in two days. I'm going to load the hillside with shots, and if they try to come through I'll set 'em off. They'll never dare tackle it."

"But suppose they should?" Eliza insisted quietly.

"Then send Doc Gray with some stretchers. I owe one to Gordon, and this is my chance." Drawing her aside, he said in an undertone: "You're got to hold my ground with Natalie while I'm gone. Don't let her see too much of Murray."

"I'll do the best I can," she answered him, "but if he seems to be in earnest I'll renege, no matter what happens to you, Danny."

He kissed her affectionately and fled. Dan had a thrilling experience. He planted shots of dynamite at various places along the right of way. He met Gordon and completely cowed him. Gordon, desperate, appealed to Murray O'Neill to call off Appleton and his men. O'Neill told Gordon they were following his instructions to the letter. Gordon then sought to strengthen his position through the women. He promised to marry Gloria if she returned with him. Natalie persuaded her mother not to go back unless Gordon married her immediately, which he refused to do.

(To Be Continued.)

800 ACRES LAND FOR SALE

\$20 per acre if taken at once. Write Bert Ostrom, Max, Neb.

NOTICE

Our Side Board Prize contest will close August 1, so those having any coupons on hand will please exchange the same for numbers.

Lorenz Bros.

Your last chance to buy a John Deere Iron Clad wagon complete and an Indiana wagon complete and two extra boxes at less than wholesale factory prices, to be sold at private sale Saturday, July 29.

J. L. Barton & Co., Plattsmouth, Neb.

Local News

From Tuesday's Daily. Frank L. Rhoden was in the city today for a few hours looking after a few matters at the court house.

Attorney C. E. Tefft of Weeping Water was in the city today looking after a few legal matters at the court house for a short time.

Barney Wampler and family and Sam Dean and family departed this afternoon for Omaha where they will make their home in the future.

Mrs. Georgia Creamer and sisters, Mrs. Jennie Rhoden and Lulu Wolf were in the city for a few hours today looking after some matters of business.

Ed S. Tutt came up this morning from his home at Murray and spent a few hours here visiting with friends and looking after some matters of business.

M. D. Pollard, John Whiteman and Allen Cox, of Nehawka, were in the city today advertising the big A. O. U. W. picnic that will be held in that place on Saturday, August 5th.

C. M. Chriswiser of Nehawka was among those going to Omaha this morning where he will visit for a few hours in that city attending to some business matters of importance.

L. D. Hiatt of Murray was in the city last evening for a few hours looking after some business matters and returned home with James Tigner who had been in Omaha for the day.

James H. Herold of Lincoln is enjoying a short vacation here visiting with his mother and his many old friends. Mr. Herold is now employed at the Rudge & Gunzel Co., at Lincoln as one of their department managers.

J. W. Newell and wife of Chicago arrived in the city this morning for a short visit with their relatives and friends in this city. Mr. and Mrs. Newell are expecting to be among the visitors here during the "Home Coming" week.

Harry Reed and T. W. Fleming, of Weeping Water motored to this city this morning to attend to some matters of business in the county seat, and visit with friends for a short time. Mr. Fleming was a pleasant caller at the Journal office.

Dr. C. S. Boggs and wife and J. F. Boggs and wife of Filley, Neb., who have been here visiting with Edgar Boggs and wife departed this morning for their home. J. F. Boggs and wife are the parents of Edgar Boggs, and Dr. Boggs an uncle of the young man.

From Wednesday's Daily.

Nat. Huston, the LaPlatte farmer, was in the city for a short time today attending to some trading with the merchants.

C. F. Vallery, the road supervisor of Plattsmouth precinct was in the city today for a few hours visiting with his friends.

George A. Sherwood came in this morning on No. 6 and will spend a few days here with his brother, Herbert and his friends.

Adam Meisinger of near Cedar Creek was in the city today for a few hours looking after a few matters of importance with the merchants.

George Mick and E. C. Clymer of Greenwood were in the city for a few hours today looking after some matters of business at the court house.

Ralph Atwood of the Cedar Creek quarries was in the city for a short time today attending to a few matters of importance and calling on his friends.

William N. Baird of Salida, Colo., arrived in the city last evening on No. 2 and will enjoy a visit here with his mother and sisters in this city for a short time.

James R. Hunter and family returned home this morning from a short visit at Denver and other Colorado points where they were enjoying their vacation.

Melville Kear of near Alvo and sister, Mrs. Harrington, of Lincoln, were in the city yesterday afternoon for a few hours attending to some matters at the court house.

Don C. Rhoden of Murray was in the city today for a few hours looking after some business matters with the merchants and visiting with his friends.

Miss Anna Hiatt of Sidney, Ia., who has been assisting in the care of her grandmother, Mrs. I. S. White at her home near Rock Bluffs and also visiting her sister, Mrs. F. R. Gobelman in this city, departed this morning for her home.

Mrs. F. R. Guthmann and little Paul, departed this morning for Murphy, Idaho, where they will visit for a short time at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Guthmann there and with the new son which has recently made his advent at the Guthmann home. Miss Minnie Guthmann accompanied her mother as far as Omaha.

GOOD AUTO TRAVELS

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The cost of Bridge Tolls for Round Trip using our Commutation Books

Auto and Driver, round Trip.....	50c
Extra Passengers, each.....	5c
\$10.00 Book.....	\$5.00
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Commutation Books Good any time and Transferable.

PLATTSMOUTH Auto & Wagon Bridge Co.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS. State of Nebraska, IN COUNTY COURT. In the matter of the estate of Sarah E. Van Doren, deceased. Notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased that hearings will be had upon the claims filed against said estate, before the County Judge of Cass County, Nebraska, at the County Court room in Plattsmouth, in said county, on the 14th day of August, 1916, and on the 14th day of February, 1917, at 10 o'clock a. m., each day for examination, adjustment and allowance. All claims must be filed in said court on or before said last hour of hearing. Witness my hand and seal of said County Court at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, this 13th day of July, 1916. ALLEN J. BEESON, County Judge.

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE COUNTY OF CASS, NEBRASKA. In the matter of the Estate of Edward G. Doyce, deceased. To all Persons Interested in the Estate of Edward G. Doyce, Deceased: You are hereby notified that there is now on file in the County Court of Cass County, Nebraska, the final report of George E. Doyce, as administrator of the estate of Edward G. Doyce, deceased, and also exceptions thereto, and statement of findings and conclusions said report filed by Frank E. Schlatter as special administrator of the estate of Edward G. Doyce, deceased. You are further notified that on the 23rd day of August, 1916, at the office of the County Judge, in the Court House, in Plattsmouth, Cass County, Nebraska, at 10 o'clock a. m., a hearing will be had upon said report, said exceptions and said statement of findings and conclusions, and the distribution of the residue of said estate, if any there be found, to such persons as are lawfully entitled thereto. To all of which you will take due notice. ALLEN J. BEESON, County Judge. Dated July 25, 1916.

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE COUNTY OF CASS, NEBRASKA. In Re-Estate of David L. Amick, Deceased. NOTICE To Ruth M. Amick, Theodore L. Amick, and to all other persons interested: You are hereby notified that a petition has been filed in the above court alleging the death intestate of David L. Amick, a resident and inhabitant of Cass County, Nebraska, on May 17th, 1916; that he left his surviving as his sole and only heirs at law, the above named persons, and praying for the appointment of Theodore L. Amick as administrator; that a hearing will be had upon said petition at the office of the County Judge, Court House, Plattsmouth, Cass County, Nebraska, on August 15th 1916, at 10 o'clock a. m., before which hour, all objections thereto, must be filed and at which time orders will be entered in accordance with finding of the Court thereon. By the Court this 20th day of July, A. D., 1916. ALLEN J. BEESON, County Judge. W. A. ROBERTSON, Attorney.

The name—Doan's Kidney Pills confidence—Doan's Kidney Pills for kidney ills. Doan's Ointment for skin itching. Doan's Regulets for a mild laxative. Sold at all drug stores.

John Miller and bride returned to this city last evening and will make their home at Mrs. H. J. Streight's apartments in the Henry Boeck building.

Mrs. J. W. Jones and babe, who have been here for the past few weeks visiting at the home of Mrs. Jones' mother, Mrs. Adah Moore, and family, departed this morning on the early Burlington train for their home at Shenandoah, Ia.

Mrs. W. F. Moore came up this morning from her home east of Murray and departed on the early Burlington train for Omaha where she will visit her grandson, Walter Hesselwood, at the hospital in that city for a few hours.

Billious? Feel heavy after dinner? Bitter taste? Complexion sallow? Liver perhaps needs waking up. Doan's Regulets for bilious attacks. 25c at all drug stores.

Cameras for Rent—Weyrich & Hadraba.



They Discussed the Wonderful Change in Their Fortunes.

big event can bring even a semblance of happiness, but it was remarkable how soon this state of mind began to give way before O'Neill's matter of fact cheerfulness. He refused to listen to their thanks and made them believe that they were conferring a real favor upon him by accepting the responsibility of the new hotel. Pending the completion of that structure he was hard pressed to find a lodging place for them until Eliza and her brother insisted that they share the bungalow with them, a thing O'Neill had not felt at liberty to ask under the circumstances. Nor was the tact of the brother and sister less than his. They received the two unfortunate as honored guests.

Gradually the visitors began to feel that they were welcome, that they were needed, that they had an important task to fulfill, and the sense that they were really of service drove away depression. Night after night they lay awake discussing the wonderful change in their fortunes and planning their future. Natalie at least had not the slightest doubt that all their troubles were at an end.

One morning they awoke to learn that O'Neill had gone to the States, leaving Dr. Gray in charge of affairs at Omar during his absence. The physician, who was fully in his chief's confidence, gravely discussed their duties with them, and so discreet was he that they had no faintest suspicion that he knew their secret. It was typical of O'Neill and his "boys" that they should show this chivalry toward two friendless outcasts. It was typical of them also that they one and all constituted themselves protectors of Natalie and her mother, letting it be known through the town that the slightest rudeness toward the women would be promptly punished.

While O'Neill's unexpected departure caused some comment, no one except his trusted lieutenants dreamed of the grave importance of his mission. They knew the necessities that hounded him, they were well aware of the trembling insecurity in which affairs now stood, but they maintained their cheerful industry, they pressed the work with unabated energy, and the road crept forward foot by foot, as steadily and as smoothly as if he himself were on the ground to direct it.

Thus far O'Neill's rivalry with the trust had been friendly, if spirited, but his action in coming to the assistance of Mrs. Gerard and her daughter raised up a new and vigorous enemy whose methods were not as scrupulous as those of the Heidelbergans.

Gordon was a strangely unbalanced man. He was magnetic, his geniality was really heart warming, yet he was perfectly cold blooded in his selfish-