

HITS STANDARD OIL

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION MAKES REPORT.

Investigators Find Policy of Octopus to Stifle Competition Generally Unfair—Secret Railway Rates Aid Combine—Fake Companies.

Washington, Jan. 25.—The interstate commerce commission sent to congress a report of the investigations made by it under the Tillman-Gillespie resolution concerning the relations of common carriers by rail to the production and distribution of oil. The report covers the distribution of petroleum and its products east of the Mississippi river, and, incidentally, the Kansas and Texas fields. The report points out generally the methods by which the Standard Oil company "has kept up and perpetuated its monopoly." It is asserted that "the ruin of competitors has been a distinct aim of the policy of the Standard Oil company in the past, systematically and persistently pursued."

"No instance," the report says, "is found where any railway company has been interested in oil lands or in petroleum production."

"The Standard Oil company largely monopolizes the handling of petroleum from the mouth of the well until it is sold to the retailer, and sometimes to the consumer, and under ordinary circumstances its margin of profit is very large."

"The evidence shows little basis for the contention that the enormous dividends of the Standard Oil company are the legitimate result of its economic. Except for its pipe lines, the Standard has but little legitimate advantage over the independent refiner."

"The Standard buys advertising space in many newspapers which it fills with reading matter prepared by agents kept for that purpose and paid for at advertising rates, as ordinary news. The assumption is that this literature furnishes many of the ideas teaching the great benefits conferred upon the public by the Standard Oil company."

"Possession of pipe lines enables the Standard absolutely to control the price of crude petroleum and the price which its competitors in a given locality shall pay. It can raise the price in one locality and obtain its own oil from another and reverse the process when it desires to do so."

The pipe line system of the Standard, the report contends, is not a natural, but rather an artificial advantage. It is argued that the reason why long pipe lines competing with those of the Standard have not been provided is found in obstacles in the way of such undertakings, having been opposed by the railroads, whose right of way has generally stood as a Chinese wall against all attempts to extend pipe lines. Ordinarily, it is said, the Standard has not received rebates in recent years, so far as has been discovered, but it has nevertheless enjoyed secret rates possessing all of the advantages so obtained over independent shippers have been of very great value to that company."

The report severely arraigns the Standard's methods of competition, saying:

"The Standard has repeatedly, after becoming the owner of a competing company, continued to operate it under the old name, carrying the idea to the public that the company was still independent and competing with the Standard. It has used such purchased or independently organized companies to kill off competitors by reducing prices. The operation of such fake independent concerns has been one of its most effective means of destroying competition. The Standard has habitually reduced the price against its competitor in a particular locality, while maintaining its prices at other places. When competition was destroyed it advanced or restored former prices. The Standard has sold different grades of oil at different prices from the same barrel. It has paid employees of independent oil companies for information as to the business of those competitors and has paid employees of industrial companies to secure the adoption of its oil in preference to that of its competitors. It has followed every barrel of independent oil to destination, such information being obtained from railroad employees. Its agents are instructed to secure customers at any sacrifice. It has tampered with the oil inspectors in different states."

Carlyle.

Thomas Carlyle, "the sage of Chelsea," died without winning much personal popularity, a fact, however, which is forgotten in admiration of his genius. Carlyle exerted a greater influence on British literature during the middle of the nineteenth century and on the religious and political beliefs of his time than possibly any other British writer. He never wrote a line that he did not believe, and in regard to style he certainly had no superior. From the position of schoolmaster in an obscure village this great Scotsman rose to be a leader in the world of letters.—London Standard.

The Masquerader

(Continued from Page Three.)

"Why?" Chilcote repeated. "Oh, the prehistoric tale—weakness stronger than strength. 'I'm—I'm sorry to come down on you like this, but it's the social side that bowls me over. It's the social side I can't stick.'"

"The social side? But I thought—" "Don't think. I never think; it entails such a constant upsetting of principles and theories. We did arrange for business only, but one can't set up barriers. Society pushes itself everywhere nowadays, into business most of all. I don't want you for theater parties or dinners. But a big reception with a political flavor is different. A man has to be seen at these things. He needn't say anything or do anything, but it's bad form if he fails to show up."

Loder raised his head. "You must explain," he said abruptly.

Chilcote started slightly at the sudden demand.

"I—I suppose I'm rather irrelevant," he said quickly. "Fact is, there's a reception at the Bramfells' tonight. You know Blanche Bramfell—Viscountess Bramfell, sister to Lillian Astrupp." His words conveyed nothing to Loder, but he did not consider that. All explanations were his own to him and he invariably chafed to be done with them.

"And you've got to put in an appearance—for party reasons?" Loder broke in.

Chilcote showed relief. "Yes. Old Franke makes rather a point of it—so does Eve." He said the last words carelessly; then, as if their sound recalled something, his expression changed. A touch of satirical amusement touched his lips and he laughed.

"By the way, Loder," he said, "my wife was actually tolerant of me for nine or ten days after my return. I thought your representation was to be quite impersonal? I'm not jealous," he laughed. "I'm not jealous, I assure you, but the burned child shouldn't grow absentminded."

At his tone and his laugh Loder's blood stirred. With a sudden, unexpected impulse his hand tightened on the banister, and, looking up, he caught sight of the face above him—his own face it seemed, alighted with malicious interest. At the sight a strange sensation seized him, his grip on the banister loosened, and, pushing past Chilcote, he hurriedly mounted the stairs.

Outside his own door the other overtook him.

"Loder!" he said. "Loder! I meant no harm. A man must have a laugh sometimes."

But Loder was facing the door and did not turn round.

A sudden fear shook Chilcote. "Loder!" he exclaimed again. "You would not desert me? I can't go back tonight. I can't go back."

Still Loder remained immovable.

Alarmed by his silence, Chilcote stepped closer to him.

"Loder! Loder, you won't desert me?" He caught hastily at his arm.

With a quick repulsion Loder shook him off, then almost as quickly he turned round.

"What fools we all are!" he said abruptly. "We only differ in degree. Come in and let us change our clothes."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE best moments of a man's life are the moments when, strong in himself, he feels that the world lies before him. Gratiified ambition may be the summer, but anticipation is the ardent springtime of a man's career.

As Loder drove that night from Fleet street to Grosvenor square he realized this, though scarcely with any degree of consciousness, for he was no accomplished self analyst. But in a wave of feeling too vigorous to be denied he recognized his regained foothold—the step that lifted him at once from the pit to the pinnacle.

In that moment of realization he looked neither backward nor forward. The present was all sufficing. Difficulties might loom ahead, but difficulties had but one object—the testing and sharpening of a man's strength. In the first deep surge of egotistical feeling he almost rejoiced in Chilcote's weakness. The more Chilcote tangled the threads of his life, the stronger must be the fingers that unraveled them. He was possessed by a great impatience. The joy of action was stirring in his blood.

Leaving the cab, he walked confidently to the door of Chilcote's house and inserted the latchkey. Even in his small net there was a grain of individual satisfaction. Then very quietly he opened the door and crossed the hall.

As he entered, a footman was arranging the fire that burned in the big grate. Seeing the man, he halted.

"Where is your mistress?" he asked in unconscious repetition of his first question in the same house.

The man looked up. "She has just finished dinner, sir. She dined alone in her own room." He glanced at Loder in the quick, uncertain way that was noticeable in all the servants of the household when they addressed their master. Loder saw the look and wondered what depth of curiosity it betrayed, how much of insight into the domestic life that he must always be

content to skim. For an instant the old resentment against Chilcote tinged his exaltation, but he swept it angrily aside. Without further remark he began to mount the stairs.

Gaining the landing, he did not turn, as usual, to the door that shut off Chilcote's rooms, but moved onward down the corridor toward Eve's private sitting room. He moved slowly till the door was reached. Then he paused and lifted his hand. There was a moment's wait while his fingers rested on the handle; then, a sensation he could not explain, a reticence, a reluctance to intrude upon this one precinct, caused his fingers to relax. With a slightly embarrassed gesture he drew back slowly and retraced his steps.

Once in Chilcote's bedroom, he walked to the nearest bell and pressed it. Renwick responded, and at sight of him Loder's feelings warmed with the same sense of fitness and familiarity that the great bed and somber furniture of the room had inspired.

But the man did not come forward as he had expected. He remained close to the door with a hesitation that was unusual in a trained servant. It struck Loder that possibly his stolidity had exasperated Chilcote and that possibly Chilcote had been at no pains to conceal the exasperation. The idea caused him to smile involuntarily.

"Come into the room, Renwick," he said. "It's uncomfortable to see you standing there. I want to know if Mrs. Chilcote has sent me any message about tonight."

Renwick studied him furtively as he came forward. "Yes, sir," he said. "Mrs. Chilcote's maid said that the carriage was ordered for 10:15, and she hoped that would suit you." He spoke reluctantly, as if expecting a rebuke.

At the opening sentence Loder had turned aside, but now, as the man finished, he wheeled round again and looked at him closely with his keen, observant eyes.

"Look here," he said. "I can't have you speak to me like that. I may come down on you rather sharply when my nerves are bad, but when I'm myself I treat you—well, I treat you decently at any rate. You'll have to learn to discriminate. Look at me now! A thrill of risk and of rulership passed through him as he spoke. "Look at me now! Do I look as I looked this morning—or yesterday?"

The man eyed him half stupidly, half timidly.

"Well?" Loder insisted.

"Well, sir," Renwick responded, with some slowness, "you look the same and you look different—a healthier color, perhaps, sir, and the eye clearer." He grew more confident under Loder's half humorous, half insistent gaze.

"Now that I look closer, sir—" Loder laughed. "That's it!" he said. "Now that you look closer, you'll have to grow observant. Observation is an excellent quality in a servant. When you come into a room in future, look first of all to me and take you cue from that. Remember that serving a man with nerves is like serving two masters. Now you can go, and tell Mrs. Chilcote's maid that I shall be quite ready at a quarter past 10."

"Yes, sir. And after that?"

"Nothing further. I shan't want you again tonight." He turned away as he spoke and moved toward the great fire that was always kept alight in Chilcote's room. But as the man moved toward the door he wheeled back again. "Oh, one thing more, Renwick! Bring me some sandwiches and a whisky." He remembered for the first time that he had eaten nothing since early afternoon.

A few minutes after 10 Loder left Chilcote's room, resolutely descended the stairs and took up his position in the hall. Resolution is a strong word to apply to such a proceeding, but something in his bearing, in the attitude of his shoulders and head, instinctively suggested it.

Five or six minutes passed, but he waited without impatience. Then at last the sound of a carriage stopping before the house caused him to lift his head, and at the same instant Eve appeared at the head of the staircase.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Disillusioned.

"She had played in amateur theatricals, you know, and threatened to go on the stage if her parents wouldn't let her marry the duke."

"And what did her parents do?"

"They let her go on the stage, gave the duke a check for a front seat and were not at all surprised when he sailed back to France the next morning."

—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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