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Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Dostoyevsky Smith Willis
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Henry Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Gogol Busch
Darwin Thoreau Twain Plato Scott
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Dickens Plato Scott
Andersen Andersen Cervantes Burton Hesse Harte
London Descartes Wells Voltaire Cooke
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Bunner Shakespeare Chamberlain Irving
Richter Chekhov da Shakespeare Chamberlain Irving
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Calumet "K"

Samuel Merwin

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Samuel Merwin

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8424-8615-7

www.tredition.com

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CHAPTER I

The contract for the two million bushel grain elevator, Calumet K, had been let to MacBride & Company, of Minneapolis, in January, but the superstructure was not begun until late in May, and at the end of October it was still far from completion. Ill luck had attended Peterson, the constructor, especially since August. MacBride, the head of the firm, disliked unlucky men, and at the end of three months his patience gave out, and he telegraphed Charlie Bannon to leave the job he was completing at Duluth and report at once at the home office.

Rumors of the way things were going at Calumet under the hands of his younger co-laborer had reached Bannon, and he was not greatly surprised when MacBride told him to go to Chicago Sunday night and supersede Peterson.

At ten o'clock Monday morning, Bannon, looking out through the dusty window of the trolley car, caught sight of the elevator, the naked cribbing of its huge bins looming high above the huddled shanties and lumber piles about it. A few minutes later he was walking along a rickety plank sidewalk which seemed to lead in a general direction toward the elevator. The sidewalks at Calumet are at the theoretical grade of the district, that is, about five feet above the actual level of the ground. In winter and spring they are necessary causeways above seas of mud, but in dry weather every one abandons them, to walk straight to his destination over the uninterrupted flats. Bannon set down his hand bag to button his ulster, for the wind was driving clouds of smoke and stinging dust and an occasional grimy snowflake out of the northwest. Then he sprang down from the sidewalk and made his way through the intervening bogs and, heedless of the shouts of the brakemen, over a freight train which was creaking its endless length across his path, to the elevator site.

The elevator lay back from the river about sixty yards and parallel to it. Between was the main line of the C. & S. C, four clear tracks unbroken by switch or siding. On the wharf, along with a big pile of timber, was the beginning of a small spouting house, to be connected with the main elevator by a belt gallery above the C. & S. C. tracks. A hundred yards to the westward, up the river, the Belt Line tracks crossed the river and the C. & S. C. right of way at an oblique angle, and sent two side tracks lengthwise through the middle of the elevator and a third along the south side, that is, the side away from the river.

Bannon glanced over the lay of the land, looked more particularly at the long ranges of timber to be used for framing the cupola, and then asked a passing workman the way to the office. He frowned at the wretched shanty, evidently an abandoned Belt Line section house, which Peterson used for headquarters. Then, setting down his bag just outside the door, he went in.

"Where's the boss?" he asked.

The occupant of the office, a clerk, looked up impatiently, and spoke in a tone reserved to discourage seekers for work.

"He ain't here. Out on the job somewhere."

"Palatial office you've got," Bannon commented. "It would help those windows to have 'em ploughed." He brought his bag into the office and kicked it under a desk, then began turning over a stack of blue prints that lay, weighted down with a coupling pin, on the table.

"I guess I can find Peterson for you if you want to see him," said the clerk.

"Don't worry about my finding him," came from Bannon, deep in his study of the plans. A moment later he went out.

A gang of laborers was engaged in moving the timbers back from the railroad siding. Superintending the work was a squat little man— Bannon could not see until near by that he was not a boy— big-headed, big-handed, big-footed. He stood there in his shirt-sleeves, his back to Bannon, swearing good-humoredly at the men. When he turned toward him Bannon saw that he had that morning

played an unconscious joke upon his bright red hair by putting on a crimson necktie.

Bannon asked for Peterson. "He's up on the framing of the spouting house, over on the wharf there."

"What are you carrying that stuff around for?" asked Bannon.

"Moving it back to make room by the siding. We're expecting a big bill of cribbing. You're Mr. Bannon, ain't you?" Bannon nodded. "Peterson had a telegram from the office saying to expect you."

"You're still expecting that cribbing, eh?"

"Harder than ever. That's most all we've been doing for ten days. There's Peterson, now; up there with the sledge."

Bannon looked in time to see the boss spring out on a timber that was still balancing and swaying upon the hoisting rope. It was a good forty feet above the dock. Clinging to the rope with one hand, with the other Peterson drove his sledge against the side of the timber which swung almost to its exact position in the framing.

"Slack away!" he called to the engineers, and he cast off the rope sling. Then cautiously he stepped out to the end of the timber. It tottered, but the lithe figure moved on to within striking distance. He swung the twenty-four pound sledge in a circle against the butt of the timber. Every muscle in his body from the ankles up had helped to deal the blow, and the big stick bucked. The boss sprang erect, flinging his arms wide and using the sledge to recover his balance. He struck hard once more and again lightly. Then he hammered the timber down on the iron dowel pins. "All right," he shouted to the engineer; "send up the next one."

A few minutes later Bannon climbed out on the framing beside him.

"Hello, Charlie!" said the boss, "I've been looking for you. They wired me you was coming."

"Well, I'm here," said Bannon, "though I 'most met my death climbing up just now. Where do you keep your ladders?"

"What do I want of a ladder? I've no use for a man who can't get up on the timbers. If a man needs a ladder, he'd better stay abed."

"That's where I get fired first thing," said Bannon.

"Why, you come up all right, with your overcoat on, too."

"I had to wear it or scratch up the timbers with my bones. I lost thirty-two pounds up at Duluth."

Another big timber came swinging up to them at the end of the hoisting rope. Peterson sprang out upon it. "I'm going down before I get brushed off," said Bannon.

"I'll be back at the office as soon as I get this corbel laid."

"No hurry. I want to look over the drawings. Go easy there," he called to the engineer at the hoist; "I'm coming down on the elevator." Peterson had already cast off the rope, but Bannon jumped for it and thrust his foot into the hook, and the engineer, not knowing who he was, let him down none too gently.

On his way to the office he spoke to two carpenters at work on a stick of timber. "You'd better leave that, I guess, and get some four-inch cribbing and some inch stuff and make some ladders; I guess there's enough lying 'round for that. About four'll do."

It was no wonder that the Calumet K job had proved too much for Peterson. It was difficult from the beginning. There was not enough ground space to work in comfortably, and the proper bestowal of the millions of feet of lumber until time for it to be used in the construction was no mean problem. The elevator was to be a typical "Chicago" house, built to receive grain from cars and to deliver it either to cars or to ships. As has been said, it stood back from the river, and grain for ships was to be carried on belt conveyors running in an inclosed bridge above the railroad tracks to the small spouting house on the wharf. It had originally been designed to have a capacity for twelve hundred thousand bushels, but the grain men who were building it, Page & Company, had decided after it was fairly started that it must be larger; so, in the midst of his work, Peterson had received instructions and drawings for a million bushel annex. He had done excellent work—work satisfactory even to MacBride & Company—on a smaller scale, and so he had been giv-

en the opportunity, the responsibility, the hundreds of employees, the liberal authority, to make what he could of it all.

There could be no doubt that he had made a tangle; that the big job as a whole was not under his hand, but was just running itself as best it could. Bannon, who, since the days when he was chief of the wrecking gang on a division of the Grand Trunk, had made a business of rising to emergencies, was obviously the man for the situation. He was worn thin as an old knife-blade, he was just at the end of a piece of work that would have entitled any other man to a vacation; but MacBride made no apologies when he assigned him the new task—"Go down and stop this fiddling around and get the house built. See that it's handling grain before you come away. If you can't do it, I'll come down and do it myself."

Bannon shook his head dubiously. "Well, I'm not sure—" he began. But MacBride laughed, whereupon Bannon grinned in spite of himself. "All right," he said.

It was no laughing matter, though, here on the job this Monday morning, and, once alone in the little section house, he shook his head again gravely. He liked Peterson too well, for one thing, to supersede him without a qualm. But there was nothing else for it, and he took off his overcoat, laid aside the coupling pin, and attacked the stack of blue prints.

He worked rapidly, turning now and then from the plans for a reference to the building book or the specifications, whistling softly, except when he stopped to growl, from force of habit, at the office, or, with more reasonable disapproval, at the man who made the drawings for the annex. "Regular damn bird cage," he called it.

It was half an hour before Peterson came in. He was wiping the sweat off his forehead with the back of his hand, and drawing long breaths with the mere enjoyment of living. "I feel good," he said. "That's where I'd like to work all day. You ought to go up and sledge them timbers for a while. That'd warm you through, I bet."

"You ought to make your timekeeper give you one of those brass checks there and pay you eighteen cents an hour for that work. That's what I'd do."

Peterson laughed. It took more than a hint to reach him. "I have to do it. Those laborers are no good. Honest, I can lift as much as any three men on the job."

"That's all right if those same three don't stop to swap lies while you're lifting."

"Well, I guess they don't come any of that on me," said Peterson, laughing again. "How long are you going to stay with us?"

The office, then, had not told him. Bannon was for a moment at a loss what to say. Luckily there was an interruption. The red-headed young man he had spoken to an hour before came in, tossed a tally board on the desk, and said that another carload of timber had come in.

"Mr. Bannon," said Peterson, "shake hands with Mr. Max Vogel, our lumber checker." That formality attended to, he turned to Bannon and repeated his question. By that time the other had his answer ready.

"Oh, it all depends on the office," he said. "They're bound to keep me busy at something. I'll just stay until they tell me to go somewhere else. They ain't happy except when they've just put me in a hole and told me to climb out. Generally before I'm out they pick me up and chuck me down another one. Old MacBride wouldn't think the Company was prosperous if I wasn't working nights and Sundays."

"You won't be doing that down here."

"I don't know about that. Why, when I first went to work for 'em, they hired me by the day. My time cards for the first years figured up four hundred and thirty-six days." Peterson laughed. "Oh, that's straight," said Bannon. "Next time you're at the office, ask Brown about it. Since then they've paid me a salary. They seem to think they'd have to go out of business if I ever took a vacation. I've been with 'em twelve years and they've never given me one yet. They made a bluff at it once. I was down at Newport News, been doing a job for the C.&O., and Fred Brown was down that way on business. He—"

"What does Brown look like?" interrupted Peterson. "I never saw him."

"You didn't! Oh, he's a good-looking young chap. Dresses kind of sporty. He's a great jollier. You have to know him a while to find out that he means business. Well, he came 'round and saw I was feeling pretty tired, so he asked me to knock off for a week and go fishing with him. I did, and it was the hardest work I ever tackled."

"Did you get any fish?"

"Fish? Whales! You'd no sooner threw your line over than another one'd grab it—great, big, heavy fish, and they never gave us a minute's rest. I worked like a horse for about half a day and then I gave up. Told Brown I'd take a duplex car-puller along next time I tackled that kind of a job, and I went back to the elevator."

"I'd like to see Brown. I get letters from him right along, of course. He's been jollyng me about that cribbing for the last two weeks. I can't make it grow, and I've written him right along that we was expecting it, but that don't seem to satisfy him."

"I suppose not," said Bannon. "They're mostly out for results up at the office. Let's see the bill for it." Vogel handed him a thin typewritten sheet and Bannon looked it over thoughtfully. "Big lot of stuff, ain't it? Have you tried to get any of it here in Chicago?"

"Course not. It's all ordered and cut out up to Ledyard."

"Cut out? Then why don't they send it?"

"They can't get the cars."

"That'll do to tell. 'Can't get the cars!' What sort of a railroad have they got up there?"

"Max, here, can tell you about that, I guess," said Peterson.

"It's the G.&M.," said the lumber checker. "That's enough for any one who's lived in Michigan. It ain't much good."

"How long have they kept 'em waiting for the cars?"

"How long is it, Max?" asked Peterson.

"Let's see. It was two weeks ago come Tuesday."

"Sure?"

"Yes. We got the letter the same day the red-headed man came here. His hair was good and red." Max laughed broadly at the recollection. "He came into the office just as we was reading it."

"Oh, yes. My friend, the walking delegate."

"What's that?" Bannon snapped the words out so sharply that Peterson looked at him in slow surprise.

"Oh, nothing," he said. "A darn little rat of a red-headed walking delegate came out here — had a printed card with Business Agent on it — and poked his long nose into other people's business for a while, and asked the men questions, and at last he came to me. I told him that we treated our men all right and didn't need no help from him, and if I ever caught him out here again I'd carry him up to the top of the jim pole and leave him there. He went fast enough."

"I wish he'd knocked you down first, to even things up," said Bannon.

"Him! Oh, I could have handled him with three fingers."

"I'm going out for a look around," said Bannon, abruptly.

He left Peterson still smiling good-humoredly over the incident.

It was not so much to look over the job as to get where he could work out his wrath that Bannon left the office. There was no use in trying to explain to Peterson what he had done, for even if he could be made to understand, he could undo nothing. Bannon had known a good many walking delegates, and he had found them, so far, square. But it would be a large-minded man who could overlook what Peterson had done. However, there was no help for it. All that remained was to wait till the business agent should make the next move.

So Bannon put the whole incident out of his mind, and until noon inspected the job in earnest. By the time the whistle blew, every one of the hundreds of men on the job, save Peterson himself, knew that there was a new boss. There was no formal assumption of authority; Bannon's supremacy was established simply by the obvious fact that he was the man who knew how. Systematizing the confusion in one corner, showing another gang how to save handling a big stick twice, finally putting a runway across the drillage of the annex, and

doing a hundred little things between times, he made himself master.

The afternoon he spent in the little office, and by four o'clock had seen everything there was in it, plans, specifications, building book, bill file, and even the pay roll, the cash account, and the correspondence. The clerk, who was also timekeeper, exhibited the latter rather grudgingly.

"What's all this stuff?" Bannon asked, holding up a stack of unfiled letters.

"Letters we ain't answered yet."

"Well, we'll answer them now," and Bannon commenced dictating his reply to the one on top of the stack.

"Hold on," said the clerk, "I ain't a stenographer."

"So?" said Bannon. He scribbled a brief memorandum on each sheet. "There's enough to go by," he said. "Answer 'em according to instructions."

"I won't have time to do it till tomorrow some time."

"I'd do it tonight, if I were you," said Bannon, significantly. Then he began writing letters himself.

Peterson and Vogel came into the office a few minutes later.

"Writing a letter to your girl?" said Peterson, jocularly.

"We ought to have a stenographer out here, Pete."

"Stenographer! I didn't know you was such a dude. You'll be wanting a solid silver electric bell connecting with the sody fountain next."

"That's straight," said Bannon. "We ought to have a stenographer for a fact."

He said nothing until he had finished and sealed the two letters he was writing. They were as follows:—

DEAR MR. BROWN: It's a mess and no mistake. I'm glad Mr. Mac-Bride didn't come to see it. He'd have fits. The whole job is tied up in a hard

knot.

Peterson is wearing out chair bottoms waiting for the cribbing from Ledyard. I expect we will have a strike before long. I mean it.

The main house is most up to the distributing floor. The spouting house is framed. The annex is up as far as the bottom, waiting for cribbing.

Yours,
BANNON.

P.S. I hope this letter makes you sweat to pay you for last Saturday night. I am about dead. Can't get any sleep. And I lost thirty-two pounds up to Duluth. I expect to die down here. C. B.

P.S. I guess we'd better set fire to the whole damn thing and collect the insurance and skip. C.

The other was shorter.

MACBRIDE & COMPANY, Minneapolis:

Gentlemen: I came on the Calumet job today. Found it held up by failure of cribbing from Ledyard. Will have at least enough to work with by end of the week. We will get the house done according to specifications.

Yours truly,
MACBRIDE & COMPANY. CHARLES BANNON.

CHAPTER II

The five o'clock whistle had sounded, and Peterson sat on the bench inside the office door, while Bannon washed his hands in the tin basin. The twilight was already settling; within the shanty, whose dirty, small-paned windows served only to indicate the lesser darkness without, a wall lamp, set in a dull reflector, threw shadows into the corners.

"You're, coming up with me, ain't you?" said Peterson. "I don't believe you'll get much to eat. Supper's just the pickings from dinner."

"Well, the dinner was all right. But I wish you had a bigger bed. I ain't slept for two nights."

"What was the matter?"

"I was on the sleeper last night; and I didn't get in from the Duluth job till seven o'clock Saturday night, and Brown was after me before I'd got my supper. Those fellows at the office wouldn't let a man sleep at all if they could help it. Here I'd been working like a nigger 'most five months on the Duluth house—and the last three weeks running night shifts and Sundays; didn't stop to eat, half the time—and what does Brown do but— 'Well,' he says, 'how're you feeling, Charlie?' 'Middling,' said I. 'Are you up to a little job tomorrow?' 'What's that?' I said. 'Seems to me if I've got to go down to the Calumet job Sunday night I might have an hour or so at home.' 'Well, Charlie,' he says, 'I'm mighty sorry, but you see we've been putting in a big rope drive on a water-power plant over at Stillwater. We got the job on the high bid,' he says, 'and we agreed to have it running on Monday morning. It'll play the devil with us if we can't make good.' 'What's the matter?' said I. 'Well,' he says, 'Murphy's had the job and has balled himself up.'"

By this time the two men had their coats on, and were outside the building.

"Let's see," said Bannon, "we go this way, don't we?"

"Yes."

There was still the light, flying flakes of snow, and the biting wind that came sweeping down from the northwest. The two men crossed the siding, and, picking their way between the freight cars on the Belt Line tracks, followed the path that wound across the stretch of dusty meadow.

"Go ahead," said Peterson; "you was telling about Murphy."

"Well, that was the situation. I could see that Brown was up on his hind legs about it, but it made me tired, all the same. Of course the job had to be done, but I wasn't letting him have any satisfaction. I told him he ought to give it to somebody else, and he handed me a lot of stuff about my experience. Finally I said: 'You come around in the morning, Mr. Brown. I ain't had any sleep to speak of for three weeks. I lost thirty-two pounds,' I said, 'and I ain't going to be bothered tonight.' Well, sir, he kind of shook his head, but he went away, and I got to thinking about it. Long about half-past seven I went down and got a time-table. There was a train to Stillwater at eight-forty-two."

"That night?"

"Sure. I went over to the shops with an express wagon and got a thousand feet of rope—had it in two coils so I could handle it—and just made the train. It was a mean night. There was some rain when I started, but you ought to have seen it when I got to Stillwater—it was coming down in layers, and mud that sucked your feet down halfway to your knees. There wasn't a wagon anywhere around the station, and the agent wouldn't lift a finger. It was blind dark. I walked off the end of the platform, and went plump into a mudhole. I waded up as far as the street crossing, where there was an electric light, and ran across a big lumber yard, and hung around until I found the night watchman. He was pretty near as mean as the station agent, but he finally let me have a wheelbarrow for half a dollar, and told me how to get to the job.

"He called it fifty rods, but it was a clean mile if it was a step, and most of the way down the track, I wheeled her back to the station, got the rope, and started out. Did you ever try to shove two five hundred foot coils over a mile of crossties? Well, that's what I did. I scraped off as much mud as I could, so I could lift my feet, and bumped over those ties till I thought the teeth were going to be

jarred clean out of me. After I got off the track there was a stretch of mud that left the road by the station up on dry land.

"There was a fool of a night watchman at the power plant—I reckon he thought I was going to steal the turbines, but he finally let me in, and I set him to starting up the power while I cleaned up Murphy's job and put in the new rope."

"All by yourself?" asked Peterson.

"Sure thing. Then I got her going and she worked smooth as grease. When we shut down and I came up to wash my hands, it was five minutes of three. I said, 'Is there a train back to Minneapolis before very long?' 'Yes,' says the watchman, 'the fast freight goes through a little after three.' 'How much after?' I said. 'Oh,' he says, 'I couldn't say exactly. Five or eight minutes, I guess.' I asked when the next train went, and he said there wasn't a regular passenger till six-fifty-five. Well, sir, maybe you think I was going to wait four hours in that hole! I went out of that building to beat the limited—never thought of the wheelbarrow till I was halfway to the station. And there was some of the liveliest stepping you ever saw. Couldn't see a thing except the light on the rails from the arc lamp up by the station. I got about halfway there—running along between the rails— and banged into a switch—knocked me seven ways for Sunday. Lost my hat picking myself up, and couldn't stop to find it."

Peterson turned in toward one of a long row of square frame houses.

"Here we are," he said. As they went up the stairs he asked: "Did you make the train?"

"Caught the caboose just as she was swinging out. They dumped me out in the freight yards, and I didn't get home till 'most five o'clock. I went right to bed, and along about eight o'clock Brown came in and woke me up. He was feeling pretty nervous. 'Say, Charlie,' he said, 'ain't it time for you to be starting?' 'Where to?' said I. 'Over to Stillwater,' he said. 'There ain't any getting out of it. That drive's got to be running tomorrow.' 'That's all right,' said I, 'but I'd like to know if I can't have one day's rest between jobs—Sunday, too. And I lost thirty-two pounds.' Well, sir, he didn't know whether

to get hot or not. I guess he thought himself they were kind of rubbing it in. 'Look here,' he said, 'are you going to Stillwater, or ain't you?' 'No,' said I, 'I ain't. Not for a hundred rope drives.' Well, he just got up and took his hat and started out. 'Mr. Brown,' I said, when he was opening the door, 'I lost my hat down at Stillwater last night. I reckon the office ought to stand for it.' He turned around and looked queer, and then he grinned. 'So you went over?' he said. 'I reckon I did,' said I. 'What kind of a hat did you lose?' he asked, and he grinned again. 'I guess it was a silk one, wasn't it?' 'Yes,' said I, 'a silk hat—something about eight dollars.'

"Did he mean he'd give you a silk hat?" asked Peterson.

"Couldn't say."

They were sitting in the ten-by-twelve room that Peterson rented for a dollar a week. Bannon had the one chair, and was sitting tipped back against the washstand. Peterson sat on the bed. Bannon had thrown his overcoat over the foot of the bed, and had dropped his bag on the floor by the window.

"Ain't it time to eat, Pete?" he said.

"Yes, there's the bell."

The significance of Bannon's arrival, and the fact that he was planning to stay, was slow in coming to Peterson. After supper, when they had returned to the room, his manner showed constraint. Finally he said:—

"Is there any fuss up at the office?"

"What about?"

"Why—do they want to rush the job or something?"

"Well, we haven't got such a lot of time. You see, it's November already."

"What's the hurry all of a sudden? They didn't say nothing to me."

"I guess you haven't been crowding it very hard, have you?"

Peterson flushed.

"I've been working harder than I ever did before," he said. "If it wasn't for the cribbing being held up like this, I'd 'a' had the cupola half done before now. I've been playing in hard luck."

Bannon was silent for a moment, then he said:—

"How long do you suppose it would take to get the cribbing down from Ledyard?"

"Not very long if it was rushed, I should think—a couple of days, or maybe three. And they'll rush it all right when they can get the cars. You see, it's only ten or eleven hours up there, passenger schedule; and they could run it right in on the job over the Belt Line."

"It's the Belt Line that crosses the bridge, is it?"

"Yes."

Bannon spread his legs apart and drummed on the front of his chair.

"What's the other line?" he asked—"the four track line?"

"That's the C. & S. C. We don't have nothing to do with them."

They were both silent for a time. The flush had not left Peterson's face. His eyes were roving over the carpet, lifting now and then to Bannon's face with a quick glance.

"Guess I'll shave," said Bannon. "Do you get hot water here?"

"Why, I don't know," replied Peterson. "I generally use cold water. The folks here ain't very obliging. Kind o' poor, you know."

Bannon was rummaging in his grip for his shaving kit.

"You never saw a razor like that, Pete," he said. "Just heft it once."

"Light, ain't it," said Peterson, taking it in his hand.

"You bet it's light. And look here"—he reached for it and drew it back and forth over the palm of his hand—"that's the only stropping I ever give it."

"Don't you have to hone it?"

"No, sir; it's never been touched to a stone or leather. You just get up and try it once. Those whiskers of yours won't look any the worse for a chopping."

Peterson laughed, and lathered his face, while Bannon put an edge on the razor, testing it with a hair.

"Say, that's about the best yet," said Peterson, after the first stroke.

"You're right it is."

Bannon looked on for a few minutes, then he took a railroad "Pathfinder" from his grip and rapidly turned the pages. Peterson saw it in the mirror, and asked, between strokes:—

"What are you going to do?"

"Looking up trains."

While Peterson was splashing in the washbowl, Bannon took his turn at the mirror.

"How's the Duluth job getting on?" asked Peterson, when Bannon had finished, and was wiping his razor.

"All right—'most done. Just a little millwright work left, and some cleaning up."

"There ain't any marine leg on the house, is there?"

"No."

"How big a house is it?"

"Eight hundred thousand bushels."

"That so? Ain't half as big as this one, is it?"

"Guess not. Built for the same people, though, Page & Company."

"They must be going in pretty heavy."

"They are. There's a good deal of talk about it. Some of the boys up at the office say there's going to be fun with December wheat before they get through with it. It's been going up pretty steadily since the end of September—it was seventy-four and three-eighths Saturday in Minneapolis. It ain't got up quite so high down here yet, but the boys say there's going to be a lot of money in it for somebody."