



BY
**ALBERT
PAYSON
TERHUNE**
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GEORGE H. BROADHURST

CHAPTER XV.
WILLIAMS entered with Roberts in tow. The latter wore a haggard, troubled look, and his natural nervousness had visibly deepened, so much so that he had not even noted Phelan's appearance in the corridor as he passed into Horrikan's private room.
"Good evening, alderman," said Horrikan civilly.
"Good evening, sir," answered Roberts palpably ill at ease.
"I understand there's a full meeting today. Even Ellis came back from the south to be here. You're the only man missing."
"I couldn't get here sooner. I—"
"I see. That's all, Williams. You needn't wait. Roberts and I want a little talk before he goes in. Now, then," went on the boss, with a complete change of manner as Williams left the room, "what's the matter with you?"
"I—I can't!"
"Can't what? Speak 'out, man! Don't stand there and mumble at me!"
"I can't vote for the Borough franchise bill."
"Can't, hey?" roared Horrikan. "Why not?"
"Because—because—" faltered Roberts; then, with a rush of hysterical emotion that blotted out his fear, he cried:
"Have you heard what that man Bennett has done? He organized a voters' committee in my ward and sent them to ask me at my own house what I was going to do about that bill. They had been stirred up by Bennett till they looked on me as a crook and on the bill as a personal robbery. They told me if I voted for it they'd know I was a dirty thief and grafter and that they'd kick me out of the ward."
"Well, well!" rumbled Horrikan soothingly, as though trying to calm a fractious drunkard. "What do you care? When they've forgotten all about the bill you'll still have the dough, won't you? Folks won't ask 'How'd he get it?' All they'll care to know is 'Has he got it?'"
"That isn't all!" Roberts blundered on, scarcely heeding the interruption. "Bennett's next step was to organize a committee of voters' wives, and they came to see my wife this morning when I was out and told her they'd heard I was going to sell myself and vote for a dishonest bill. My wife—my wife thinks I'm the squardest, noblest man on earth. Oh, you needn't sneer! Her trust means everything to me. She told the women I wouldn't stoop to any deed that wasn't honest, and they answered: 'Our husbands believe Mr. Roberts is a crook. If he is really honest he'll vote against that bill, as he did before.' Then on my way home this noon I met my little boy. He was crying. I asked him what the matter was. He said that some boys had told him I was a grafter. I tell you," his voice rising almost to a scream, "Bennett's made my life a hell. I'm no crook. I'm honest and—"
"Sure you're honest!" Horrikan exclaimed, as though to a cross child. "Honest as the day! That's why you're voting for our bill. Because the crooked clauses have been cut out of it, and in its present form it's a benefit to the city."
"That isn't why I promised to vote for it," contradicted Roberts, with a despairing dash of courage. "It was because I—because—"
"Never mind why, then, but just go ahead and do it."
"I won't! I dare not!"
"You'll do it, I say!" stormed Horrikan. "You can't welch on me at this stage of the game. Those Sturtevant Trust company notes of yours were sent to you and—"
"And I won't take them!" declared Roberts, slamming two slips of paper down upon the table. "There! Take them back!"
"What do I want of them?" argued Horrikan craftily. "They belong to you."
"They don't. I won't keep them."
"You'll have to. I keep you to your promise."
"What promise?" asked a voice behind them.
Bennett, hastily summoned by Phelan, had entered the room unobserved by either of the excited men.
"What promise?" he asked again. "A promise to—"
"What are you doing here?" bellowed Horrikan in fury. "You called me down once for coming into your private office without knocking. What do you mean by coming into mine?"

"Yours?" queried Alwyn. "I had an idea it was the city's. The time is past when the words 'Horrikan' and 'city' meant the same thing. Well, Roberts, how are you going to vote? I want to believe you honest, and—Why, what's all this?" his eyes falling on the forgotten notes on the table.
"Nothing of yours!" shouted Horrikan, making a futile, furious grab for the documents which Alwyn was picking up. "Drop them! Drop them, I say, or you'll—"
"Why should I?" asked Bennett calmly, his quick eye taking in the nature of the slips of paper even as his alert brain grasped in full the meaning of the transaction in which they figured. "Do they belong to you?"
"They don't belong to you anyway," retorted Horrikan, "and if you dare read them—"
"I've already read them. Roberts," he added in a kinder voice, turning to the shaking alderman, "these were to have been your bribe, weren't they, for voting for the Borough bill?"
His quietly compelling tone and glance forced from Roberts a frightened "Yes" before Horrikan could interfere.
"I thought so. Be quiet, Horrikan," he commanded as the infuriated boss sought to speak through his choking wrath. "This is between Roberts and me. Now, then—"
"I returned the notes to him!" pleaded Roberts in panic. "Honestly, I did! Just before you came in. I could have kept them, and he couldn't have prevented me even if I voted against the bill. But I'm square and—"
"You are square!" affirmed Bennett, gripping the alderman's cold, moist hand in friendly reassurance. "I knew all along you were honest at heart. Horrikan wanted to bribe you, and you wouldn't be bribed. Now, I want you to go into the council room and vote as your manhood tells you to."
Roberts, comforted, yet still trembling, obeyed, not venturing a second look at Horrikan.
"Now, my friend," said Bennett pleasantly when he and the boss were alone together, "what are you going to do about it? It seems to me your game is up."
"I want those notes!" panted Horrikan, finding coherent speech with an effort through his red mist of rage.
"Why? They're not yours. They aren't made over to you, and there is no cancellation stamp on them. They are the property of the Sturtevant Trust company, and I'll send them back there tomorrow—after I've had them photographed."
"You'll give them to me," shouted Horrikan, his mighty body vibrating with fury, "or you'll never leave this room alive!"
"You're a fool, Horrikan," remarked Bennett, with condescending calm. "For you don't even know the right man to bully!"
He gazed unflinchingly into the maddened little eyes of the boss, and so for a moment they stood—patrician and proletarian—in the world old struggle of the two for supremacy.
Horrikan's face was scarlet, distorted, murderous; Bennett's pale, cold, deadly in its repose.
Slowly, little by little, Horrikan's eyes dropped. He moved awkwardly to one side from his position in front of the door and Bennett, without so much as a backward look, passed out.
The boss, like a man in a daze, sank heavily into a chair and gazed straight ahead of him, his usually red face gray and pasty.
But he was not to enjoy even the scant boon of solitude. From the ante-room Gibbs strolled in.
"They're going over some unimportant preliminary business," remarked the broker, "so I came out for a breath of fresh air. How are things going?"
"We're beat," grunted Horrikan, not looking up.
"Beat?" screamed Gibbs, ashen and inert at the news. "You don't mean it! You can't mean it! Great heaven!"
The sight of the other's cowardly emotion seemed to rouse Horrikan from his apathy.
"If I can stand it, you can!" he snarled. "You only lose your percentage on the deal, while I—"
"A percentage?" echoed Gibbs, too panic stricken to heed his own indiscretion. "Every cent I had in the world! I—"
He checked himself an instant too late.
"So?" drawled Horrikan, his keen little eyes searing the other with boundless contempt. "So it was you who were secretly buying up the stock and tailing in on our game, hey?"

"I'm ruined! Broke! And—"
"And you've got it coming to you, you whining traitor! The man who goes back on his partners deserves all the kicking he gets."
"I—I didn't mean any harm!" mumbled the crushed Gibbs. "It couldn't hurt you people to have me buy Borough stock for myself, and I'd have cleared up a million and more. Oh, don't grieve like that, Horrikan, but try to think out some way of—"
"Of what, you cur?"
"Isn't there any way even now to make Bennett let up on his fight?"
"If there was you couldn't be of use to us, so why should I talk about it to you?"
"But I'd do anything in the world—anything!"
"You would?" cut in Horrikan sharply.
"Yes, yes! Only give me a chance! I'd—"
Horrikan considered, then said reflectively:
"No chance is too slight to take at a time like this, and nobody's too rotten to be of use. I've found there are three things, one of which will always buy any man—a woman, ambition or cash. We've tried Bennett on ambition; he doesn't need money, so only the first of the three remains."
"A woman? I don't understand."
"Miss Wainwright."
"But—"
"Listen here. Bennett's in love with Wainwright's niece. You've cut him out. Go and tell him if he'll let our bill alone you'll smash the engagement and leave her free to marry him. See?"
"I can't! I—hold on, though! Afterward I could deny the whole thing, couldn't I? It'd be his word against mine, and she'd never believe I could do such a thing. I—I might try."
"Yes," growled Horrikan, "you might. A cur that's lost all his nerve can try things that even an ordinary crook would balk at."
But Gibbs did not hear. He had returned to the corridor in search of Bennett. The man scarcely deserved the opprobrium heaped on him by Horrikan. A brilliant, daring operator, he was, unknown to himself, a rank coward at heart. For the first time in his life the cowardice had cropped out, and, to do Gibbs justice, it had driven him temporarily insane. In his normal senses he would never have stooped to the plan he was now so eager to carry out. It was a putrid bit of jetsam at which a financially drowning man did not scruple to clutch.
Horrikan followed him from the room, his own splendid nerve quite recovered from the crushing blow his hopes had received. He had stalked heavily on the deal. Moreover, its failure, as he knew, meant the wreck of that mighty political prestige he had so long and wearisomely built up. It might even, if Alwyn fulfilled his threat about the notes, lead to graver personal consequences. Yet the bulldog pluck that had carried this man of iron from the gutter to the summit of political power did not desert him, nor did he show the loss of one iota of his customary monumental calm.
Scarcely had Horrikan quitted the room when Perry and Dallas entered it.
"You could cut the atmosphere in there with a cheese knife," Perry was saying. "Williams doesn't think the Borough bill will come up for half an hour or so. We'd better spend the time till then in here than to stay there and turn our lungs into a microbe zoo."
Dallas did not answer. She sat down by the table and rested her head dejectedly on one little gloved hand. The sight of Bennett, his grave, hopeless appeal to her; the calm, utter despair of his brave face—all these had affected her deeply. Perry noticed with brotherly concern her look and attitude.
"Feeling faint?" he asked.
"No, I'm all right, thanks."
"You look pretty near as blue as Alwyn. He—"
"Don't let's talk of him, please," she begged.
"Why not? He's the whitest chap this side of Whiteville."
"That's what I used to think, but I know better now."
"Then, miss," broke in a voice from the doorway, "you're entitled to another know."
Phelan, who, passing down the corridor, had heard her last words as he reached the threshold, turned into the room.
"Excuse me for buttin' in on a family chat," he remarked, coming forward, "but I'm pretty well posted on his honor's character, an' when I hear any one knockin' him it's me to the bat. What have you got against Mr. Bennett? None of your measly business, says you. 'Q'rite so,' says I, an', that bein' the case, let's hear all about it."
Something that underlay the seeming impertinence of the alderman's bluff speech touched Dallas. On impulse she spoke:
"Mr. Bennett," said she, "is opposing the Borough bill, knowing we shall be paupers if he defeats it. He also sold Borough stock short before he announced his veto. What can one think of a man who enriches himself at the expense of his friends?"

"Gee," cried Perry, "that's a terrible thing! Bennett's the original man higher up, I'm afraid. I wonder he isn't afraid to wear the clothes of such a wicked greaser as himself!"
"Oh, Perry! Don't joke about it!" begged Dallas. "Can't you see the serious side of anything? We shall be penniless and dependent on—"
"Fear thou not, sister mine!" declared Perry in his best melodramatic manner. "Paupers, sayest thou? Far be it so! Little Brother Perry will guard thee from the cold, shivery swats of a wintry wind. Maybe we can sell violets or start a fight club or—"
"Don't!" she urged, jarred by his flippancy. "You don't understand. I—"
"For that story of his honor's self-stock short and makin' a pile of cash on his own veto," put in Phelan genuinely worried, "Horrikan's looked it up an' got enough facts to make him think he can prove it. He's goin' to make Williams tell the whole story to the aldermen tonight. It's a lie, of course, but it'll hurt his honor a lot, an' the worst of it is Bennett refuses to deny it."
"He does, eh?" remarked Perry. "Then I'll do some talking about it. I'll have to fracture a promise I made Alwyn, but I guess it's worth while."
"What do you mean?" queried Dallas in wonder.
"I mean Bennett lent me the money to sell enough stock short to make up for what you and I would lose if the bill was quashed, and he gave me a letter to his own broker. We carried it through, and now you and I stand pat to win whichever way the cat jumps. We're on velvet, thanks to Alwyn."
"He did this for us?" gasped Dallas in amazement. "But why didn't you tell me? Why did you let me misjudge him?"
"He made me promise not to let you know a thing about it, and—"
"Say, youngster," broke in Phelan, tingling with excitement, "you come chasin' along with me into the aldermen's meetin'. I'll have you get up there an' tell what you know. It'll knock that lie of Williams' and Horrikan's so high it'll forget to hit groun' again. Come on, son! There's sure liable to be hot doin's in the meetin' in about eleven seconds. Come along!"
(To be continued.)

HUGHES WRONG ON TARIFF.
Cannot See That Trust Products Should Be on Free List.
In Governor Hughes' speech at Lincoln, Neb., he quoted one of Mr. Bryan's proposals thus:
"Let us go through the tariff schedules and put on the free list the things that are being manufactured by the trusts. That will destroy them."
Mr. Hughes rejoins, "True enough, but would it not also destroy the weaker manufacturers in the same line, who are fighting against the trusts and who, being small, have the least power to resist?"
We cannot suppose Governor Hughes to be ignorant of the fact that Mr. Bryan and others in proposing the "free list" for trust made products have never proposed to "destroy" the trusts as industries or put them out of business, but only to destroy the monopolistic character of their business and make them conduct it legitimately on a competitive basis. Can Mr. Hughes name a trust that would cease to do business if deprived of the tariff protection which now enables it to charge monopoly prices? Is he ignorant of the extortions of the steel trust, the oil trust, the borax trust and many others, made possible by the tariff which keeps out foreign competition?
So far is Mr. Bryan from proposing to destroy any business by removing tariff duties that he stated in his Des Moines speech and again in his New York speech that if any trust considers the "free list" remedy too drastic "it can avoid it by giving up its monopoly." If the trusts are not to be forced into bankruptcy it cannot be assumed that their smaller competitors will be ruined. They will, rather, be benefited by being rid of the domineering tactics usually employed by monopolies.
What excuse can Mr. Hughes give for his unwillingness to apply so obvious and just a remedy for oppressive tributes levied by the trusts, and what excuse can he give for misrepresenting his opponent's position?

Humor and Philosophy
By DUNCAN M. SMITH

PERT PARAGRAPHS.
Why, oh, why does the hired girl so inconveniently desire to change the initial letter of her appellation and become a tired girl and proceed to retire from the scene?
The bill collector always falls to respond to your polite "pray don't mention it."
"Don't!" she urged, jarred by his flippancy. "You don't understand. I—"
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(To be continued.)

No Harmony.
"What makes Clarice so cross?"
"She can't decide on her color scheme for the winter."
"Why?"
"Maroon promises to be fashionable."
"Doesn't she like it?"
"But, you see, she wants to wear red hair this winter."

Cheap Postage Benefits.
The past is all forgotten;
It's hands across the sea,
And England is our neighbor.
It's bosom friends are we.
We send King Edward greeting
Across the waters damp
And ask him for a favor
All for a two cent stamp.
Of course we licked the British
In that old family row,
But why should we hold grudges
Against them for it now?
Perhaps we can forgive them
And set the matter straight
By writing them a letter
On that new postage rate.
That they deserved a licking
They couldn't well deny,
And also that they got it—
That scrap was not a tie—
But we should not endeavor
Those battles to revamp
And tell them all about it
Just for a two cent stamp.
Then hark the penny postage!
A penny over there
Is two cents of our money,
As I have read somewhere.
So write King Ed a letter
And tell him that your boy
Had measles, but is better.
That ought to give him joy.

PERT PARAGRAPHS.
It might be well for some people to learn that one of the natural results of a butting in is a throwing out.
Some people trust the Lord and then ask their fellow men to treat them as they treat the Lord.
Money makes matrimony go and frequently makes alimony come.
As a general thing the man who is absolutely certain that he knows how wants some one else to do it.
On the one hand some people can't make an effort and on the other hand any amount of effort couldn't make some people.
If the bachelor were abolished, it is interesting to reflect whether he would strive to acquire a residence in Nevada.
The politician who is out to win should be chary about lubricating his machine with any grade of Standard oil.
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"I had LaGrippe last fall as I thought in a mild form. I was weak, tired, and short of breath; could hardly go about, and a good deal of the time sort of an asthmatic breathing and extremely nervous. I began taking Dr. Miles' Heart Cure and Nerve and now I feel so much better in every way. I am so thankful that I began taking this medicine, and shall not hesitate to tell others how much good it has done me."
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