

THE TITAN

word. "I don't see what we can do," said Alderman Pinski to Alderman Hvraneck, his neighbor. "It looks to me as if we might just as well not try."

At this point arose Alderman Gilleran, small, pale, intelligent, anti-Cowperwood. By prearrangement he had been scheduled to bring the second, and as it proved, the final test of strength to the issue. "If the chair pleases," he said, "I move that the vote by which the Ballenberg fifty-year ordinance was referred to the joint committee of streets and alleys be reconsidered, and that instead it be referred to the committee on city hall."

This was a committee that hitherto had always been considered by members of council as of the least importance. Its principal duties consisted in devising new names for streets and regulating the hours of city-hall servants. There were no perquisites, no graft. In a spirit of ribald defiance at the organization of the present session all the mayor's friends—the reformers—those who could not be trusted—had been relegated to this committee. Now it was proposed to take this ordinance out of the hands of friends and send it here, from whence unquestionably it would never reappear. The great test had come.

Alderman Hoberkorn (mouthpiece for his gang because the most skilful in a parliamentary sense). "The vote cannot be reconsidered." He begins a long explanation amid hisses.

A Voice. "How much have you got?"

A Second Voice. "You've been a boodier all your life."

Alderman Hoberkorn (turning to the gallery, a light of defiance in his eye). "You come here to intimidate us, but you can't do it. You're too contemptible to notice."

A Voice. "You hear the drums, don't you?"

A Second Voice. "Vote wrong, Hoberkorn, and see. We know you."

Alderman Tiernan (to himself). "Say, that's pretty rough, ain't it?"

The Mayor. "Motion overruled. The point is not well taken."

Alderman Guigler (rising a little puzzled). "Do we vote now on the Gilleran resolution?"

A Voice. "You bet you do, and you vote right."