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Governor by Proxy

By JOHN TAYLOR WALDORF

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On the station platform at desolate Xerxes Junction stood two impatient men. The big, lumbering, round faced man was Colonel Joe Layson; the thin, sallow one was Henry Clay Finley. It was campaign time, and the twin were "swinging around the circle," Colonel Layson as the candidate of the "outs" for governor and Finley as the spellbinder paid to extol the merits of his party's standard bearer.

The afternoon train that was to stop at Xerxes Junction and take on passengers for Ardenia was late, and the rough old colonel began to swear as he studied his watch.

"It'll be here in a minute, governor," said Finley soothingly, carefully observing the custom of addressing candidates by the title to which they aspire.

A scrawny, bent over old woman, carrying an apronful of wood, came out of the clump of trees across the railroad track and limped along until she reached the platform, where she



"BE YOU GUVNER?" SHE ASKED.
stopped and looked up into the colonel's face with vacant eyed curiosity. Finley was shocked.

"Such beastly manners!" he exclaimed. "Shall I order her to be off, governor?"

Before the colonel could answer, the old woman clambered upon the platform and limped eagerly to his side.

"Be you the guvner?" she asked. The colonel smiled a big hearted smile and answered, "That's what they call me."

"Won't you pardon my boy? He's servin' five years in Osborn prison. The old man's been sick abed for months, and I ain't able to work, and we're nearly starvin'. Pardon the boy, won't you, guvner? I wanted to go down to the capital a year ago when they took Dannie away, but I had no money, and I couldn't walk that far."

The colonel raised his finger and seemed about to explain, but the woman talked on piteously.

"They say he stole a cow for Halder, the cattle king that lives down at Belden. Maybe you know him. I don't believe Dannie did any stealin', but if he did, guvner, it wouldn't be right rushin' him off to prison and leavin' old Halder free and still hirin' honest folks' boys to steal cattle for him."

"It doesn't seem right, for a fact," admitted the colonel.

"But, my good woman," interrupted Finley, "there was certainly no evidence against Mr. Halder, or surely the majesty of the law would have been sustained, and he, too, would have suffered the punishment of the transgressor."

"I don't catch all your fine words, mister, but I know Dan's in prison, and Halder is guilty. Fine words can't get round them facts."

"Well put," chuckled the colonel. "Finley, it would be a good scheme if you'd talk English once in awhile."

The woman looked puzzled a moment, but the colonel's face was kindly, and, throwing down her bundle of wood, she dropped on her knees before him.

"Please pardon my boy, guvner! The old man and me'll die before spring if you don't. It won't hurt you to pardon him. He ain't no dangerous criminal. Anybody round here'll tell you Dannie Higgs was never before the judge till this time. He's all the child I got left, guvner. Don't keep him from me!"

The colonel helped Mrs. Higgs to her feet and led her to a bench just outside the door of the little telegraph office. All the while he was thinking deeply. He was the candidate of the "outs" for governor. The "ins" had a natural majority of 50,000 votes. Governor John Randall, with a good official record to back him, was up for reelection, and Colonel Joe Layson had as much chance of becoming governor as he had of gaining the throne of Turkey. He resolved the situation in his mind, and as he found his inspiration Mrs. Higgs started to rise, but he waved her back, saying: "Just wait there, madam, until I send a message and get an answer. I'm going to investigate this matter at once."

Finley whistled, but the colonel only frowned and stalked into the telegraph office. For perhaps two minutes he wrote steadily. When he had finished he hurriedly gathered up the sat-

isfactory sheets and slung them down on the operator's table.

"Here, my man," he commanded, "Hurry in a big hurry."

The operator looked up sleepily, rubbed his eyes and read:

To Hon. John Randall, Executive Mansion, Kingston.

My Dear Governor—I'm running against you, but you know it's only for exercise, and I want you to help me out of a hole that has nothing to do with politics. I've got an old woman here who takes me for you and wants me to pardon her son. It would be a shame to undecieve her, and anyway I'm better looking than you are. The boy's name is Dan Higgs. He was sent up for five years for cattle stealing. His father is sick, and both father and mother are starving. Pardon the boy for me, John. I never envied you your job until this minute, and even now I want it only long enough to pardon a cow stealer. Answer at once. I'll wait here at this God forsaken junction until I hear from you.

JOSEPH LAYSON.
It was the longest and by far the oddest telegram known in Xerxes Junction. The operator looked dubiously and timidly suggested, "You might skeletonize this and save money."

"No, sir," said the colonel decidedly. "Send every blamed word of it. This is a matter of state."

The operator labored with the message, while the colonel went on to the platform to tell Mrs. Higgs to wait patiently. Soon after the message had gone over the wires the Ardenia train came puffing in.

"Come on, governor," said Finley. "We can't wait any longer."

"I can't leave now," answered the colonel, leaning languidly against the station door.

"But you must. We speak in Ardenia tonight."

"You can make enough noise for both of us."

"Ardenia counts on hearing you, governor," urged Finley. "A willful disappointment like this might ruin your chances of election."

"You know I never had any, Finley. What's the use of saying that? Anyhow, I'm not going." With that he took a seat on the bench beside Mrs. Higgs. "You'd better be moving, Finley," he added. "I'll join you at Beedsburg in the morning."

Just then the operator came rushing out with a message. The colonel seized it, almost tearing it in half in his eagerness, then held the pieces in his shaking hands while he read:

Dear Colonel—Have telephoned to ward-en at Osborn. No objection there. Higgs signed this minute. Glad to be of service.

JOHN RANDALL.
The colonel turned to Mrs. Higgs. "It's all right," he said thickly. "Your boy will be home tomorrow."

"Thank you! Thank you! You're the best guvner God ever made!" At this she broke down and sobbed.

"All aboard!" shouted the conductor. The colonel took a step toward it. "It's all right," he repeated. "I've done only my duty, but if you feel grateful tell the boy to vote for me, John Randall, for governor."

Waterproof Paper.

Japanese oil papers, made from the bark of trees or shrubs, are astonishingly cheap and durable, according to a writer in the National Geographic Magazine. As a cover for his loaf of tea when a rainstorm overtakes him the Japanese farmer spreads over it a tough, pliable cover of oiled paper which is almost as impervious as tarpaulin and as light as gossamer. He has doubtless carried this cover for years, neatly packed away somewhere about his cart. The rickshaw coolies in the large cities wear rain mantles of this oiled paper, which cost less than 18 cents and last for a year or more with constant use.

But perhaps the most remarkable of all the papers which find a common use in the Japanese household are the leather papers of which tobacco pouches and pipe cases are made. They are almost as tough as French kid, so translucent that one can nearly see through them and as pliable and soft as calfskin. The material of which they are made is as thick as cardboard, but as flexible as kid.

Tom Corwin Fought the Reason.

This story is told of the famous Tom Corwin: During his first term in the Ohio house of representatives, about the year 1823, a bill to stop the whipping of criminals was under discussion. Corwin, a native of Kentucky, ardently advocated the repeal of the old law. A member of the house who had come from Connecticut was active on the opposite side. He urged the retention of whipping as a punishment and asserted as a strong point in favor of his contention that he had noticed while living in Connecticut that whenever a man was whipped in execution of the sentence of a court of justice he immediately left the state and did not return.

Corwin promptly retorted that he knew many people had come to Ohio from Connecticut, but he had never before known the reason for their coming.—Cleveland Leader.

All Things to All Beliefs.

A certain woman of a lively disposition and much beloved in her circle says that she is a woman suffragist once a year, at the time of the annual dinner. "They have such a lot of ice cream and strawberries!" she exclaims, with sparkling eyes. The New York Times tells another story to mate with this:

A woman in Brooklyn who is active in promoting the suffragist cause in that city tried recently to induce a lively young matron to join the Woman's Republican league. She met with a flat refusal. "But your husband is a Republican, and you belong to the Woman Suffrage association."

"I belong to the Suffrage association and to the Antisuffrage association," was the placid reply. "I like the women in one and the refreshments in the other. But honestly I don't believe in either!"

PRACTICAL IMPERIALISM.

Canadian Children's Correspondence With London and Australia—Interesting Letters From Distant Fellow Britons.

A valuable and interesting medium for diffusing Imperial sentiment is being conducted by Mr. R. W. Hicks, Principal of the Queen Victoria School, Close Avenue, Toronto, through correspondence between his pupils and other children in England and Australia. Two years ago the plan was originated by Mr. Robert Cook, a teacher in the Fields School, London, England, who inquired at the office of the Canadian High Commissioner in London for some Canadian school with which his pupils might correspond, with a view to inculcating Imperialism. The name of Mr. Hicks, for reasons which Mr. Hicks in his modesty cannot see, was suggested, and a correspondence was entered upon between the pupils of both schools, which proved of value as well as interest. The London School Board, however, heard of it some time ago, and asked that it be stopped until they could think of a plan by which all board schools in London might correspond with one or more schools in the colonies.

Mr. Hicks meantime found the scheme working so well that he desired to extend it to Australia. He wrote to the Superintendent of Education, for South Australia and the letter being published in The Children's Hour, an official publication, as a result an extensive correspondence has developed. Later on Mr. Hicks made an attempt to start a similar correspondence with pupils in Pennsylvania, but the frank manner in which Toronto pupils discussed American affairs from a Canadian standpoint soon demonstrated that this was unworkable, and it had to be abandoned. That more education will have to be inculcated is shown by the fact that some letters reach Toronto children from Australia, after passing under the review of the school teacher, addressed to "Toronto, Canada, U.S.A."

From the Canadian side the correspondence has proved beneficial in spreading a knowledge of this country, the Canadian boys' descriptions of their holidays inspiring a keen desire among London boys to come and share their enjoyment. The letters are written as homework by the pupils, who are in this way instructed in letter-writing.

The correspondence has a broadening influence, as it presents the children's views of events from the standpoint of other worlds. For instance, Alfred Parry, writing from the London Field School, Hackney, London, says: "I live in the remotest of London in a quiet street. At present I am not very well off, but I must not grumble, as there are many who are poorer than I. I will tell you about our football teams. Of our first eleven the captain is a small chap named Abraham Goodman, who is a forward and plays inside left, while the vice-captain, Henry Barry, plays centre half-back. He is a hard kicker." Then follows a lengthy description of other members of the team and their conduct on the field, ending with: "Henry Fuller is vice-captain and often scores a goal for his team because he dashes at the ball and carries everything before him. Wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, I remain your friendly fellow-subject, Alfred Parry."

A letter from Holman Arndt of Mylor, South Australia, said in part: "In answer to your teacher's letter which I saw in The Children's Hour, a special book printed for the use of Mylor is one of the suburbs of Adelaide, which is in the south of South Australia. The district is very often flooded because of terrible rainfalls which we have. The City of Adelaide is a very busy city. It has large streets, which are always crowded with people, and some very old and beautiful buildings, all of stone. Brushes and all different kinds of things are manufactured in this city. Fruit is also sent away in abundance from here also fishes. Our school room overlooks beautiful scenery, of large green trees, several bubbling little creeks and lovely bush flowers of all colors. We have a lot of beautiful flowers here, one particularly, called 'wattle,' and is of a yellow color with pretty green leaves. My mother's cottage is situated in a low valley with hills all around it, for the country about here is very hilly, and lower down still lies a very pretty gorge, much admired by every person who sees it."

An Imperial touch is given by William J. Wade of Yunta, South Australia, who says: "I started going to school the day the Queen died." He says the average annual rainfall there is about five inches, and that the drought has had awful effects on the country. The production around there are wool, sheep, cattle, fat and skins. In a postscript he says: "When writing I wish you would give me a description of the Niagara Falls."

"The South Australia people are very much like the English," writes Miss Dolly Byrne of Warooka, South Australia. "Their favorite amusements are swimming, hunting, bicycle riding, cricket, football, tennis and horse racing. We are also fond of music and dancing. There is quite a craze for walking matches here lately."

One of the English correspondents asks for early reply, "as we are thinking of emigrating."

A Sailor Boy's Rendition.

Amusing was the effort of the lad who, on being requested to write down what he could remember of the teacher's lesson on the Sermon on the Mount, reproduced one precept as follows: "If thy brother compel thee to go with him one mile, go with him by train."

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