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His face again grew very white, and he became so weak that it seemed as if death was near at hand. The doctor, who at that moment arrived, stepped briskly to his bedside, while Duggan, spurred on by the fear of losing his job, hurried off to find McShea. At the foot of the long series of stairways he met the priest.

Duggan found the district leader in a saloon on the Bowery, below the rooms of the political club of the district. With a great deal of trepidation, for he had always held the great man in awe, he stepped up to him. "Toomey's dying, and he's made this will," he blurted out.

McShea, leaning against the bar, slowly read the paper that Duggan nervously poked up into his face, and then looked back at Duggan with much of dubiety. McShea was very stout, with grizzled hair, deep-set eyes, bulbous nose, and firm lips. His face at first sight seemed ordinary, but a second glance showed that it expressed capacity of an unusual order, and you began to realize how it was that he had been able to hold the position of district leader in his assembly district for nearly thirty years.

For a district leader, to be successful, must be a man of determination and ability, full of tact and resourcefulness. He is the head of his clan, and his clan is composed of every voter of his party in the district. He sees to it that his tribesmen have their full proportion of city jobs, both transient and of the more permanent character.

were times when, contrary to his usual habit of deciding alone, he chose to submit questions to his retainers, and the matter of Toomey's job he felt to be a fitting one for such a submission. He smiled grimly as he noted the angry clouding of the five countenances. Duggan weakly told the barkeeper to "ask the gentlemen what they would have," but this time they all refused to drink, and scowled upon him in a darkling circle.

"We heard that Toomey might die," said McShea, "and there are forty-two members of the club who are applicants for his job."

"And each of us is a man as has paid his dues square up," put in one of the men.

"But I'm only behind because I've been out of work," protested Duggan, "and I'll pay up all my back dues out of my first month's pay."

The circle sniffed. "When you get the job," said one. The circle laughed, and Duggan flushed with mortification. McShea looked on, judicially contemplative. "When's Toomey likely to die?" he asked.

"The doctor says to-night'll be the last—that he'll sure go before morning," replied Duggan. "And that's why he wanted me to see you at once about his job."

"That's bad," said McShea. "Poor fellow! I didn't know he was quite so sick as that. I'll go up and see him tonight."

"But about his job—" began Duggan again, persistently.



Southdown Sheep

For instance, when a big hotel burns down, and many lives are lost, and the city puts hundreds of laborers at work clearing the ruins in the search for bodies, each district leader in the city—if his is the party in charge of the city's politics—hurries the unemployed men of his district to the contractor, and the contractor must fairly balance the claims of all, or else he is sure to obtain no further jobs from the city.

When a voter is sick, the district leader is expected to see to it that he is cared for. When the voter is in need, his need must be relieved, or else an order must be obtained, transferring the sufferer to the almshouse or a public hospital. The head of the district clan has all the responsibilities of a tribal chief. And for the many benefits, actual and potential, of which he stands as the source, he expects an unquestioning return. The men must vote right at every election, and those who aim to get the most benefits must keep up their membership in the local political club.

McShea looked at Duggan doubtfully. He set his glass down, and it stood in a beery ring. He slowly wiped his lips on the towel that hung beneath the bar. Several members of the district club, who had been sitting at dingy tables, lounged forward. They cast hostile glances at Duggan, who nervously asked them all to drink. They promptly did so, and then, putting their glasses down in five beery rings, and wiping five mouths on the hanging towels, resumed their hostile looks.

"Duggan wants Toomey's place. You've all heard he's very sick. Well, Toomey's willed his job to Duggan," said McShea, in curt explanation. There

The district leader's patience gave way. He had been somewhat embarrassed by the forty-two applications, and the difficulty of deciding so as to make no enemies, and he was really annoyed that this will should further complicate the situation. He knew that many would believe that Toomey's last will should be respected, and he also knew that there would be inevitable dissatisfaction should the desirable job be given to Duggan, who had been derelict with his membership and dues. He turned on Duggan sharply.

"Why didn't you apply to the President? Don't you know this is a job in the United States Custom-house? What have I got to do with it, do you suppose?"

Duggan looked at him, open-mouthed. "You're the district leader, and—and Toomey always said—"

Still more irritated, McShea interrupted him. "And don't you know that at least the Collector of Customs is the head of his own department here, and that he's got all the say in such matters? I'm the district leader? Yes! But what have I got to do with all you fellows, except to keep track of your meetings and the way you vote? Do you expect me to settle every question that comes up? Take that will to the Collector, and see if he'll give you the job!"

Duggan's mouth was open wider than ever, and the jaws of the other five also dropped. The idea, thus propounded by their leader, awed them. They exchanged glances of dumb amazement, and every man spat solemnly into the big wooden cuspidore. Duggan was the first to recover himself. "Ah, you're just guyin' us! There's nobody bigger'n