

A Prince of Sinners

By E. Phillips Oppenheim

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CHAPTER IV.

A Question for the Country

For the first time in many years it seemed certain that the Conservatives had lost their hold upon the country. The times were ripe for a change of any sort. An ill-conducted and ruinous war had drained the Empire of its surplus wealth, and every known industry was suffering from an almost paralyzing depression—Manchester, perhaps, as severely as any town in the United Kingdom. Its staple manufactures were being imported from the States and elsewhere at prices which the local manufacturers declared to be ruinous. Many of the largest factories were standing idle, a great majority of the remainder were being worked at half or three-quarters time. Thoughtful men, looking ten years ahead, saw the cloud which even now was threatening enough, grow blacker and blacker, and shuddered at the thought of the tempest which before long must break over the land. Meanwhile, the streets were filled with unemployed, whose demeanour day by day grew more and more less pacific. People asked one another helplessly what was being done to avert the threatened crisis. The manufacturers, openly threatened by their discharged employees, and calmed by others higher in authority and by public opinion, still pronounced themselves helpless to move without the aid of legislation. For the first time for years protection was openly spoken of from a political platform.

Henslow, a shrewd man and a politician of some years' standing, was one of the first to read the signs of the times, and rightly to appreciate them. He had just returned from a lengthened visit to the United States, and what he had seen there he kept at first very much to himself. But at a small committee meeting held when his election was still a matter of doubt he unbosomed himself at last to some extent.

"The vote we want," he said, "is the vote of those people who are less in their heads, and who see risk and starvation coming in upon them. I mean the middle-class manufacturer and the operative who are dependent upon them. I tell you where I think that as a nation we are going wrong. We fixed once upon a great principle, and we called it to our aid for all time. That is a mistake. Absolute Free Trade, such as is at present the national policy, was a magnificent principle in the days of Cobden—but the times have changed. We must change with them. That is where the typical Englishman fails. It is a matter of temperament. He is too slow to adapt himself to changing circumstances."

There was a moment's silence. These were ominous words. Every one felt that they were not lightly spoken. Henslow had more behind him than most men. He was a man of many names, interspersed from his place.

"You are aware, Mr. Henslow," he said, "that many a man has lost an assured seat for a more guarded speech than that. For generations even a whisper of the sort has been counted here—especially from our party."

"Maybe," Henslow answered, "but I am reminded of this, Mr. Harrison. The pioneers of every great social change have suffered throughout the whole of history, but the man who has selected the proper moment, and struck hard, has never failed to win his reward. Now I am no novice in politics, and I am going to make a prophecy. Years ago the two political parties were rejudged on the Irish question. Every election which was fought was simply on these lines—it was upon the principle of Home Rule for Ireland, and the governance of that country from the United Kingdom, or the maintenance of the Union. Good! Now, in more recent times, the South African war and the realization of what our Colonies could do for us has introduced a new factor. Those who have believed in a doctrine of expansion have called themselves 'imperialists,' and those who have favored less wide-reaching ideals, and perhaps more attention to home matters, have been christened 'Little Englanders.' Many elections have been fought out on these lines, if not between two men absolutely at variance with one another on this question, still on the matter of degree. Now I am going to prophesy. I say that the next re-adjustment of parties and the time is not far ahead, will be on the tariff question, and I believe that the controversy on this matter, when once the country has laid hold of it, will be the greatest political event of this century. Listen, gentlemen, I do not speak without having given this question careful and anxious thought, and I tell you that I can see it coming."

The committee meeting broke up at a late hour in the afternoon amidst some excitement, and Mr. Bullsum walked back to his office with Brooks. A fine rain was falling, and the two men were close together under one umbrella.

"What do you think of it, Brooks?" Bullsum asked anxiously.

"To tell you the truth, I scarcely know," the younger answered. "Ten years ago there could have been but one answer—today—well, look there."

The two men stood still for a mo-

ment. They were in the centre of the town, at a spot from which the main thoroughfares radiating into the suburbs and manufacturing centres. Everywhere the pavements and the open space were a memorial tower aloof were crowded with letters, their hands in their pockets, watching, waiting—God knows, for what. There were all sorts, of course, the professional idlers and the drunkard were there, but the others—there were no lack of them. There was no lack of men, white-faced, dull-eyed, dejected, some of them actually with the brand of starvation to be seen in their sunken cheeks and wasted limbs. No wonder that the swinging doors of the public houses, where there was light and warmth inside, opened and shut continuously.

"Look," Brooks repeated, with a tremor in his tone. "There are thousands and thousands of them—and all of them must have some sort of a home to go to. Fancy it—one's own work, perhaps children—and nothing to take home to them. It's such an old story, that it sounds hackneyed and commonplace. But God knows there's no other tragedy on His earth like it."

Mr. Bullsum was uncomfortable.

"I've given a hundred pounds to the Unemployed Fund," he said.

"It's money well spent if it had been a thousand," Brooks answered. "Some day they may learn their strength, and they will not suffer then, like brute animals, in silence. Look here, I'm going to speak to one of them."

He touched a stout youth on the shoulder.

"Out of work, my lad?" he asked. The youth turned surlily round.

"Yes, looks like it, don't it?"

"What are you?" Brooks asked.

"Clicker."

"Why do you leave your last place?"

"Gaffer said he's more orders—couldn't keep my lot. The shop's shut up. Know of a job, sir?" he asked, with a momentary eagerness. "I've two characters in my pocket—good ones."

"You've tried to get a place elsewhere?" Brooks asked.

"Tried? D'ye suppose I'm standing here for fun? I've tramped the blessed town. I went to thirty factories yesterday and forty today. Know of a job, sir?" he asked, looking at Brooks with a keen eye.

"I wish I did," answered Brooks, simply. "Here's half-a-crown. Go to that coffee-house over there and get a meal. It'll all I can do for you."

"Good for you, sir," was the prompt answer. "I can treat my brother on that. Here, Ned," he caught hold of a younger boy by the shoulder, "hot coffee and eggs, you sinner. Come out!"

The two courried off together.

"It is just this, Brooks," said, in a low tone, "just the thought of these people makes me afraid, positively afraid to argue with Henslow. You see, he may be right. I tell you that in a healthy governed country there should be work for every man who is able and willing to work. And in England there isn't. Free Trade works out all right logically, but it's one thing to see it all on paper, and another to see this—here around us—any man."

Bullsum was silent for several moments.

"I tell you what it is, Brooks," he said. "I'll send another hundred to the Unemployed Fund tonight."

"It's generous of you, Mr. Bullsum," the young lawyer answered. "You'll never regret it. But look here, there's a greater responsibility even than upon us today. They don't want our charity. They've an equal right to live with us. What they want, and what they have a right to, is just legislation. That's where we come in. Politics isn't a huge joke, or the vehicle for any one man's personal ambition. We who interest ourselves, however remotely, in them, impose upon ourselves a great obligation. They have got to find the truth. That's why I hesitate to say anything against Henslow's new departure. We're off the track now. I want to hear all that Henslow has to say. We must not neglect a single chance whilst that terrible cry is ever in our ears."

They parted at the tram terminus. Mr. Bullsum takes a car for his suburban paradise. As usual, he was the centre of a little group of acquaintances.

"And how goes the election, Bullsum?" some one asked him.

"Mr. Bullsum was in no hurry to answer the question. He glanced round the car, collecting the attention of those who might be supposed interested.

"I will answer that question better," he said, "after the mass meeting Saturday night. I think that Henslow's success or failure will depend on that."

"Got something up your sleeve, eh?" his first questioner remarked.

"Maybe," Mr. Bullsum answered. "Maybe not. But apart from the immediate matter of this election, I can tell you one thing, gentlemen, which may interest you."

He paused. One thumb stole towards the armhole of his waistcoat. He liked to see these nightly companions of his hang upon his words. It was a proper and gratifying tribute to his success as a man of affairs.

CHAPTER V.

The Marquis of Arranmore.

They had met almost on the steps of his office, and only a few minutes after he had left Mr. Bullsum. Brooks was attracted first by a certain sense of familiarity with the trim, well-balanced figure, and immediately af-

terwards, she raised her eyes to his in passing. He wheeled sharply round and held out his hand.

"Miss Scott, isn't it? Do you know I have just left your uncle?"

She smiled a little shyly. She looked tired, and her boots and skirt were splashed as though with much walking.

"Indeed! I suppose you see a good deal of him just now while the election is on?"

"I must make myself a perfect nuisance to him," Brooks admitted. "You see the work is all new to me, and he has been through it many times before. Are you just going home?"

She nodded.

"And you are almost wet through, and quite tired out," he said. "Look here. Come across to Mello's, and have some tea with me, and I will put you in a car afterwards."

She hesitated—and he led the way across the street, giving her no opportunity to frame a refusal. The little tea-parlour was warm and cosy. He found a comfortable corner, and took her wet umbrella and cape away.

"I believe," he said, sitting down opposite her, "that I have saved your life."

"Then I am not sure," she answered, "that I feel grateful to you. I ought to have warned you that I am not in the least likely to be a cheerful companion. I have had a most depressing afternoon."

"You have been to your tailor's," he suggested, "and your new gown is a failure—or is it even worse than that?"

She laughed slyly. Then the conversation was interrupted. He thought her very graceful as she bent forward and busied herself attending to his wants. Her affinity to Selina and Louise was undeniably true. It was true that she was pale, but it was the pallor of refinement, the student's absence of colour rather than the pallor of ill-health.

"Mr. Brooks," she said presently, "you are busy with the election, and you are constantly into touch with all classes of people. Can you tell me why it is that it is so hard just now for poor people to get work? Is it true, what they tell me, that many of the factories in Medchester are closed, and many of those that are open are only working half and three-quarter time?"

"I am afraid that is quite true, Miss Scott," he answered. "As for the first part of your question, it is very hard an anxious about it. I have been trying to find them this afternoon. I have heard things, Mr. Brooks, which have made me ashamed—ashamed to live, while they die. And these girls—they have known so much misery. I am afraid of what may happen to them."

"These girls are mostly boot and shoe machinists, are they not?"

"Yes. But even Mr. Brooks says that he cannot find them work."

"It is only this afternoon that we have all been discussing this matter," he said, gravely. "It is serious enough. God knows, the manufacturer tells me that he is suffering from American competition here and in the Colonies. He tells us that the workpeople themselves are largely to blame, that their trades unions restrict them to such an extent that he is hopelessly handicapped from the start. But there are other causes. There is a terrible want of disposition all through the country. The working classes have no money to spend. Every industry is threatened with competition from abroad. Do you understand the principles of Free Trade at all?"

"Not in the least, I wish I did."

"Some day we must have a talk about it. Henslow has made a very daring suggestion today. He has given me all agreed upon one thing. The crisis is fast approaching, and it must be faced. These people have the right to live, and they have the right to demand that legislation should interfere on their behalf."

She sighed.

"It is a comfort to hear you talk like this," she said. "To me it seems almost insupportable to see so much suffering, so many people suffering, not only physically, but being dragged down into a lower moral state by sheer force of circumstances and their surroundings, and all the time we educated people go on our way and live our lives, as though nothing were happening, as though we had no responsibility whatever for the holocaust of misery at our doors. So few people stop to think. They won't understand it. It is so easy to put things behind one."

"Come," he said cheerfully, "you and I, at least, are not amongst those. And there is a certain duty which we owe to ourselves, too, as well as to others—to look upon the brighter side of things. Let us talk about something less depressing."

"You shall tell me," she suggested, "who is going to win the election?"

"Henslow!" he answered, promptly.

"Oh, I suppose—"

"To his credit, of course. You may laugh, Miss Scott, but I can assure you that my duties are no sinecure. I never knew what work was before."

"Too much work," she said. "Is bet-

ter you too little. After all, more people die of the latter than the former."

"Nature meant me," he said, "for a lazy man. I have all the qualifications for a first-class idler. And circumstances and the misfortune of my opinions are going to keep me going at express speed all my life. I can see it coming. Sometimes I shudder."

"You are too young," she remarked, "to shrink from work. I have no sympathy to offer you."

"I begin to fear, Miss Scott," he said, "that you are not what is called sympathetic."

She smiled—and the smile broke into a laugh, as though some transient idea rather than his words had pleased her.

"You should apply to my cousin Selina for that," she said. "Everyone calls her most delightfully sympathetic."

"Sympathy," he remarked, "is either a heaven-sent joy—or a bore. It depends upon the individual."

"That is either cynical—or rude," she answered. "But, after all, you don't know Selina."

"Why not?" he asked. "I have talked with her as long as with you—and I feel that I know you quite well."

"I can't be responsible for your feelings," she said, a little brusquely, "but I'm quite sure that I don't know you well enough to be sitting here at tea with you even."

"I won't admit that," he answered, "but it was very nice of you to come."

"The fact of it was," she admitted, "my headache and appetite were much stronger than my sense of conversation. Now that the former are dispensed the latter are beginning to assert themselves. And so—"

She began to draw on her gloves and ladies with luggage came clattering up the street. She watched it with darkening face.

"That is the sort of man I detest," she said, motioning her head towards the window. "You know whose carriage it is, don't you?"

"No, I don't know that any one road here drove with postillions."

"It is the Marquis of Arranmore. He has a place at Rindor, I believe, but he is only here for a few months in the year."

Brooks started and leaned eagerly forward.

"Why do you hate him?" he asked.

"What has he done?"

"Didn't you hear how he treated the Mayor when he went out for a subscription to the Unemployed Fund?" Brooks shook his head.

"No! I have heard nothing."

"Poor old Mr. Wensmore went out all that way purposely to see him. He was kept waiting an hour, and when he was called in he found the Marquis laughing at him. 'My dear fellow,' he said, 'the Count gave me a suggestion that the Count change his name to Hans Ferdinand Barnes and accept the £75 a month from his father in consideration thereof. The Count replied that if he had violated the traditions of his family he had gone abroad and nothing more could be expected of him. His wife, he said, was endowed with the highest gift, the blessing of God. She was a woman of his choice and that he would never change his name because of his marriage. He said that it was a glorious thing to be a man of the people, free and independent.'

The press accepted the Crown Prince's letters as genuine and commenting upon them declare that they contain nothing embarrassing to the heir of the German throne. On the contrary they reveal him as a true friend possessed of a sincere and open nature. Generally the letters excite sympathy with the Crown Prince rather than criticism of him.

Discussion in Federal House Whether Companies Are Responsible.

Ottawa, April 7.—The bill to amend the Railway Act for free claims by locomotives was up for consideration in the Commons Railway committee today. The bill provides that the company making use of locomotives which set fire to property shall be liable for damage to the property by such fire whether guilty of negligence or not.

Mr. Lancaster opposed the bill on the ground that a man through the carelessness of property burned, but nevertheless insured against fire, should not be held liable for more than \$5,000 damage and that if a person whose property was destroyed carried insurance on that property several years, the railway company should also receive the benefit of this insurance. Mr. Turfitt said that he would be unalterably opposed to such a proposition. The bill stood over for further consideration Tuesday night.

Summons for Haves.

Edmonton, April 7.—Alfred Hawes, of Toronto, who is to issue a writ against G. W. and J. K. Cornwall for \$255,000, has been summoned to appear before the commission to tell what he knows about the Great Waterways. Lawyers acting for him have not yet issued a writ against Clark and Cornwall.

Makes Big Purchase.

Montreal, April 7.—A local paper publishes the following: "Former Lieutenant-Governor James Dunsmyth, of British Columbia, has purchased 34,000,000 Canadian Northern Railway bonds."

I have neither sympathy nor politics, but I assure you that at heart I am a most devout Radical. I have a vote, too, and you may count upon me."

"I am very glad to hear it," Brooks answered. "Shall I put you down on the list to be fetched?"

The Marquis laughed.

"I'll come without," he declared. "I promise. Just remind me of the day."

He glanced towards Mary Scott and for a moment seemed about to include her in some forthcoming remark. But whatever it might have been it never came. She kept her eyes averted, and though her self-possession was absolutely unflinching she hastened her departure.

"I am not hurrying you, Mr. Brooks," she asked.

"Not in the least," he assured her. He raised his hat to the Marquis and his party, and the former nodded good-humoredly. There was silence until the two were in the street. Then one of the men who had been looking after them dropped his eye-glass.

"I tell you what," he said to his wife. "There's some chance for us in Medchester after all. I don't believe Arranmore is popular amongst the ladies of his own neighborhood."

The Marquis laughed softly.

"She has a nice face," he remarked, "and I should imagine excellent perceptions. Curiously enough, too, she reminded me of some one who has every reason to hate me. But to the best of my belief I never saw her before in my life. Lady Carrom, that weird-looking object in front of you is a teapot—and those are tea-cups. May I suggest a new set for them?"

(To be Continued.)

CHANGED HIS NAME

German Prince Marries Outside of Royalty—Comes to America—German Court Wish Him to Change Name.

Berlin, March 31.—The paper today published the series of letters exchanged between Crown Prince Frederick William of Germany and his friend Count Ferdinand von Hochberg, which were given publicity in New York at the trial of Noah E. Barnes, who is charged with the misappropriation of \$20,000 of the assets of the Cotton Food, Cook Copper Company, of which he was president, and in which von Hochberg induced his friends in Germany to invest \$150,000.

The letters concerned principally the displeasure of the head of the house of Hochberg because Ferdinand married Louise Carow, a Berlin shop girl. In one instance the Crown Prince wrote, "You are impossible over here and look for all of us." Another letter he said, "The Count change his name to Hans Ferdinand Barnes and accept the \$75 a month from his father in consideration thereof. The Count replied that if he had violated the traditions of his family he had gone abroad and nothing more could be expected of him. His wife, he said, was endowed with the highest gift, the blessing of God. She was a woman of his choice and that he would never change his name because of his marriage. He said that it was a glorious thing to be a man of the people, free and independent."

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GRAFTING IN PITTSBURG

City Banking at the Bottom of the Bribery Scandals—Klein's Confessions Explain the Situation—Fifty-Six Councilmen Bought.

A private citizen of Pittsburg can deposit his money in any bank he chooses, but the municipality of Pittsburg, which is the sum of its private citizens and their possessions cannot do so. This is the reason at the bottom of the Pittsburg bribery scandals, the motive of the wholesale grafting. The Finance Committee of the City Council must recommend to Council the banks that shall be entrusted with the millions of dollars that are collected by the municipality in taxes. The council may either reject or accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee, but whatever banks are finally chosen they and no others can be the legal depositors of the municipality.

To act as the bankers of one of the wealthiest cities in the world is an honor. It is also highly profitable. It is natural, therefore, that there should be competition among the banks for a position. In July, 1908, it became the duty of the Finance Committee to nominate six banks as custodians of the city's funds. The committee, after considerable deliberation, named six banks: The Farmers' Deposit National of Pittsburg; the Second National of Pittsburg; the German National of Pittsburg; the Columbia National of Allegheny; the German National of Allegheny; and the Workingman's Savings Bank and Trust Company, of Allegheny. Subsequently, the council ratified this choice, and for a period of four years beginning Feb. 1, 1909, these six banks will be the only legal custodians of the money owned by the municipality of Pittsburg. At the time there was general suspicion that some grafting had been done, but nothing definite was known until a prominent local politician named John P. Klein was put in the sweatbox. Then, to use his own picturesque phrase, he "pulled out the props and let the sky fall" to "clear his conscience."

Klein's confession is one of the most staggering indictments of a municipal administration that ever saw the light. It shows that practically the whole City Council was ready to be bought and sold, members valuing themselves at various sums from \$50 up. The mere names of accused councillors gives an outsider little clue to their position, and for the most part one is left in the dark as to whether they were men of the lowest social order or representatives of a higher class. It is significant, however, that five out of 56 aldermen indicted are medical men. Two of them have already confessed and resigned—Johannes Asmus, from the name, the grafters appear to belong to no particular race—Jews, Germans, Irish and Scotch being dishonored by Slinsted, Blodet, McGrath and Ferguson. Democrats and Republicans are also represented among the bribe takers.

Capt. Klein's confession shows that the six banks put up a sum exceeding \$100,000 for bribery purposes. This little tugboat captain, who is a Tammany politician of the most genuine type, was the prime mover in the plot. He was cunning enough to see that the banking privilege was a valuable one. He is supposed to have been guided by precedent in fixing on the sum of \$15,000, which he afterwards raised to \$17,500, as the price each bank should pay, for it is no incident in Pittsburg that the bank ordinance of 1908 was by any means the first instance of bribery of the sort. With four associates in council, namely, Brand, Stewart, Wasson and Ferguson, he framed the plot. The dirty work was divided, some of the conspirators going to the banks, and others handing over the swag to the councilmen. Klein, as the captain of the pirate crew, both solicited and bought. He went boldly to some of the banks, and told what it would cost to bribe the councilmen. "It is almost incredible, but nevertheless it appears to be the case, that 56 members of the Council were bought and paid for. It does not appear that there was in the whole council one man who did not 'get his mite.'" Klein made out a list of members for the banks, and set down opposite the name of each the amount he thought would be necessary to purchase him. This list is published side by side with a list showing what was actually paid. While in many cases the estimate proved correct, in a few it was too low. Generally speaking, however, Klein overestimated the virtue of his colleagues, and saved about \$5,000 of the money that was supposed to go into the aldermen's pockets. This sum he and one of his colleagues divided between them. The remorse of Dr. Strassley, for instance, for whom \$500 was set aside, and who succumbed for \$250, and also of Councilman Hooper, who proved an equal bargain, and for Councilman Fisher, who might have got \$200, but who sold out for \$50, are among the heartrending features of the exposure. Some of the dishonest aldermen are already in prison. Others are on their way. The great question of how the bribers, the prominent bankers, are to be punished remains to be solved. The struggle to reach the "men higher up" will interest two countries.