

endeavour to delude his hearers into believing.

The address began on time, and General Twitchwire had just informed his audience that if through supineness and lack of concerted action the gubernatorial chair became occupied, he would not say filled, by a person with the deficient mental acumen and erroneous views which characterized the person who was the standard-bearer of the party opposed to good government, the consequence could not fail to be most disastrous—when a distant yet loud voice was heard to exclaim—

‘You don’t say!’

The speaker glared angrily about, and the chairman of the meeting, who had taken the precaution to arrange that admission should be only by tickets of a peculiar colour, wondered whether counterfeit had been imposed upon the doorkeeper. The general resumed the thread of his discourse, and had just pronounced a glowing eulogium upon Puttytop, when a voice exclaimed:

‘Hang Puttytop! Give us a man!’

Then the sheriff and two constables, all of whom were Puttytop men, began suspiciously to scan the audience. But not a Baggs’ adherent could they see, except Nuderkopf Trinkelspiel, to whom it was well known that a frequenter of Gripp’s rumshop had sold a ticket for ten cents, the inducement offered being that the meeting would close with a lottery, in which every ticket holder would be entitled to a prize of some sort. But Nuderkopf, judging by his snores, was slumbering soundly; besides the disturbing voice used a better English accent than Nuderkopf Trinkelspiel could ever be suspected of acquiring.

Several other remarks of the speaker were greeted with derisive yells through Jack’s speaking tube, and the famous General Twitchwire took occasion to remark, with a great display of offended dignity, that if the authorities could not suppress such disturbers it was pretty certain that the party in Doveton was upon its last legs.

‘Gott macht es!’ (God grant!) shouted Jack down the pipe.

This seemed to offer a clue to the offender. The language was certainly Nuderkopf Trinkelspiel’s, and he was positively the only Baggs’ man present, so the sheriff and two constables dashed at him and rudely aroused him. It was the only evening meeting, except some of a religious character, which Nuderkopf had attended during his residence in Doveton; he had frequently to be aroused in church; he was very religious and religiously inclined; the force of association caused him to imagine

he was in church; the silence to indicate a temporary and dangerous stagnation of religious service, so he cleared his throat and successfully launched the first line of a devotional song before he opened his eyes, when a rude hand was clapped over his mouth and another was applied with great force to the side of his head, and then he was pulled at and dragged, and finally lifted over the back of his seat, which happened to be the last bench of the jury box, and was dropped out of the window, landing on the sidewalk three feet below, in a state of confusion which bordered on imbecility.

This was too much for such of Nuderkopf’s religious associates as were there present, even although they were Puttytop men, so they arose to points of order, several of them speaking at a time, and they were rebuked by the chair, and hooted at by the rowdies, who always infested political meetings; and one excitable German cast an opprobrious epithet at a conspicuous rowdy, and the rowdy retorted by snatching a transparency from a bearer, and, throwing it lancewise at the German, the cloth caught fire, and a general yell ensued, and everybody looked out for number one, with the result of making number two of everybody else, and the famous General Twitchwire stepped suddenly to a window and jumped out, and the sheriff and the two constables bawled ‘order’ until they were themselves their own auditors, and a body of quiet but observant Baggs’ men in the window of a house directly opposite, agreed with each other that the Puttytop ticket didn’t seem to be looking up so very much, after all.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A QUIET LITTLE GAME.

When Jack finally left his hiding place in the court room, it was with a pretty distinct conviction that no one would ever discover his secret, and that the evil of this life seemed as ruthless in its pursuit of Nuderkopf Trinkelspiel as in his own case. Then there slowly developed within him the thought that Nuderkopf, who had been the principal sufferer by the trick of the speaking-tube, was not even a member of the despised Puttytop faction; so Jack, like many another mischief-maker who injures some one of whom he has never thought while planning his departures from rectitude, sought refuge from his conscience by plunging into gloomy reverie upon the fatal lack of sequence in earthly affairs.