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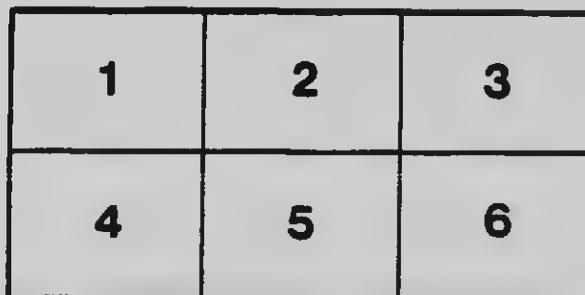
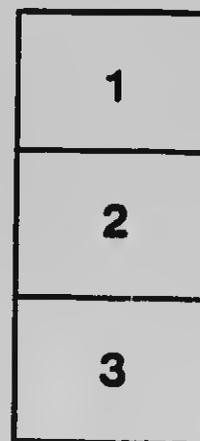
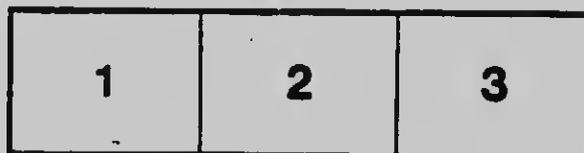
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via White Pass & Tangle
- at 11.50 this evening it
was possible to easily
read the print in this
book by - daylight

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monument. - in front of
the library. at 11.15 - few
plants of light.

The country resembles Port Arthur
and the northern, western parts
of tularis except for the high
mountains which can be
seen all around it about
10 miles distance.



Wendell

Wendell Phillips

1840-1869

#5



“It seems to me, Jerry, as if we—you and I—might be entering the shadow of something very—very difficult’”

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

BY
PETER CLARK MACFARLANE



ILLUSTRATED
BY
LESLIE I. BENSON

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS

PS3525

A225

C73

19102

C.2

PRINTED IN GARDEN CITY, N. Y., U. S. A.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The "Organization" Swings Its Club . . .	3
II. An Empty Chair	13
III. Rescuers Rescued	22
IV. A Lily in the Mud	37
V. In the Family Bosom	46
VI. Aurentsky's Troubles Begin	58
VII. Jerry Makes Discoveries	69
VIII. A Man of the Fighting Plebes	84
IX. The Traffic in Franchises	90
X. The First Blow	101
XI. A Reporter Makes Discoveries	110
XII. The Sign Will Not Come Down	125
XIII. Sweets and Sours	136
XIV. The Crime of Arson	147
XV. Omens Good and Bad	153
XVI. What Did It?	165
XVII. Those Aurentskys	173
XVIII. Government By Murder	192
XIX. The City Rouses	203
XX. Election Day.	213
XXI. The Sage of Philadelphia	223

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXII.	Organizing Victory	232
XXIII.	The Angel Chorus	237
XXIV.	For Sylvy Aurentsky!	246
XXV.	The Big Sisters	256
XXVI.	The Powers Take Notice	269
XXVII.	The Blood-red Dream	280
XXVIII.	The Strangle Hold	296
XXIX.	The People on Trial	312
XXX.	Tides of Battle	332
XXXI.	Sylvy Would Tell Victor	340
XXXII.	Victor Would Tell Sylvy	348
XXXIII.	In the Vestibule of Tragedy	357
XXXIV.	The Tragedy	364
XXXV.	The Search for the Motive	374
XXXVI.	Between Life and Death	381
XXXVII.	The Campaign Begins	391
XXXVIII.	Jerry at the Helm	402
XXXIX.	The Thick of the Fight	408
XL.	The Trial of Jacob Aurentsky	416
XLI.	The Day of Decision	435
XLII.	The Court of Last Appeal	445

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

“It seems to me, Jerry, as if we—you and I—
 might be entering the shadow of something
 very—very difficult” *Frontispiece*
 (See page 145)

FACING PAGE

“‘Coward!’ snorted Jeremiah Thomas Archer.
 ‘What did you hit that little man for?’” 8

“‘Higgins, get Edmunds on the phone,’ Buck-
 ingham directed” 24

“‘Young man, unless you give me your word
 before you leave here that your political activi-
 ties will cease at once, your firm’s credits will
 be curtailed as fast as I can shear them off’” 296



THE CRACK IN THE BELL

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THE CRACK IN THE BELL

CHAPTER I

THE "ORGANIZATION" SWINGS ITS CLUB

ANEMIC little Moritz Rosensweig stood in the door of his fruit emporium on South Street, maintaining an enterprising lookout for prospective customers. Grapes, plums, apples, and peaches—the major stock of his store, in fact—were displayed in heterogeneous profusion on racks that sloped forward from the window line over more than half the sidewalk.

Across the street came Policeman Strongburger, idly swinging his club. The sight of the approaching uniform threw fear into Moritz. Outwardly he maintained a calm, suave front, but inwardly he quaked. He did not know why, but he did; he always did, for this distrust of the man in uniform was deeply grained. It sprang from something back of his present mercantile life and back of Philadelphia, far back—in Moscow or Vienna or mayhap in Little Russia—back of himself even, in the long generations that lay behind him and behind the history of his people. His father, at the sight of the man in uniform, had always whispered maledictions into his beard.

"Cover up that fruit, Moritz!" directed the blue-coat. Something jumped inside of Moritz.

"Cover it up?" he quavered apprehensively.

"That's the law," growled the policeman.

"But," and Moritz maneuvered a pleading, deprecatory smile on to his wizened features, as recognizing that the officer would have his little joke. "But chust

look, Mister Policeman!" Moritz waved his hand up the street. On all sides were the fruit-stocks of small merchants, exposed in heaped-up sprawling boxes as were the fruits of Moritz, and not a sheet of glass, not a yard of mosquito-netting even, protected them from the floating dust or flying germs.

"Cover it up, I say!" barked Strongburger, impatient of protest.

"Efen up-town, Mister Strongburger, in der Goyisher neighbourhood, dey don't efen cover up deir stands."

"Say, Rosensweig! What the blazes do you know about what they do up-town? If you was to get up to Broad Street even, you couldn't find your way back here without a guide. You cover it—seel! If them things ain't under glass or netting when I come back in an hour it's a ride in the wagon for you."

Strongburger moved along, munching one of Moritz's apples. The Jew, rooted to the uneven brick pavement, watched weakly the leisurely progress of the officer, anxious to see if he would tell Cohen also to cover up his fruit. Evidently Strongburger did not see Cohen's fruit, nor Isenstein's, nor Toczyłowski's.

Moritz sighed resignedly, but, succeeding this, a stubborn stiffening of the lips hinted that some tenacity of soul was housed in his weak and ill-developed body.

Calling Rachel, his wife, to come forth from her back room and mind the shop, the Jew slipped covertly into Goldberg's Fair, where he made grudging purchases of the necessary yards of mosquito bar, choosing red as the least objectionable colour. Its effect, however, was inevitably depressing. The appealing brightness of his apples and the seductive suggestion of lusciousness in peach and grape and plum was veiled, filtered, and almost obliterated by the netting. An occasional customer was attracted, nevertheless—in part, no doubt, by the wistful yearning in the face of the little merchant.

"Ach!" scorned some of them. "What for should you be so partickler, Moritz?"

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

5

"You want the fruit clean, ain't it?" camouflaged Moritz stoutly. "If you should come out to buy fly-schpecks Cohen's grapes would got a thousand to the bunch."

But if the success of such sarcasms enabled Rosensweig to doubt that his business was under a ban the doubts were soon dissipated by the demeanour of his rivals, for Cohen, young Sam Isenstein, and Toczykowski each managed excuse for strolling by and gloating with ill-concealed smiles on the dismal effect of lumpy-looking heaps under red mosquito bar. Nevertheless, Moritz maintained his front and did a fair business through the afternoon until four o'clock, when Policeman Strongburger went off duty.

At 4:15, Strongburger's relief, Officer Hellman had proceeded on the first of his rounds so far as that corner on South Street at which Strongburger had appeared first this afternoon to Moritz. From this as an observation post, the officer cocked an eye across to Rosensweig's place. Seeming to notice the change and to approve it, he drew near, as if to admire, but Moritz, watching narrowly, apprehensively, as he watched all men in uniform, saw that the look in Hellman's eye was hard. Its glance settled presently upon the narrow strip of pavement which the fruit boxes left to pedestrians. Hellman appeared to measure this distance critically and to find it wanting.

"What you doin', Rosensweig, with your store on the side-walk?" he demanded harshly. "Don't you know it's against the law?"

"Vat law? Vat you mean?" Moritz gurgled, struggling with the lump of apprehension in his throat.

"Four feet three inches from the building line is what the law says. You got seven feet if you got an inch, and the public can walk in the gutter, huh!"

Moritz turned slightly yellow, but as in the first moment of conflict with Strongburger, so now he waved his arms weakly up and down the street, where a single sweep of the eye comprehended fruits, vegetables,

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

fish, both live carp and dried herring, fowl, and in short, goods of every kind scattered over the pavement or piled within a foot of the curb. In a score of places the encroachment was far greater than that modest yardage which Moritz had ventured upon, and in some, Hellman's hyperbole about crowding pedestrians into the gutter threatened to become a fact. But to this pantomime of the little storekeeper the policeman's answer was that hard, unseeing eye—or an eye that saw at most only the sprawling, sinning boxes of Moritz Rosensweig.

"Efen up-town dey do it," ventured Moritz, his little eyes mingling fear and pleading.

"Up-town? Say! You ain't up-town, are you?" queried Officer Hellman, contemptuously. "If the boxes ain't back to the line when I come by in an hour I'll pinch you."

Moritz coughed slightly, covering his mouth with his hand, but with his timid rabbit eyes still fixed on the officer, and his glance almost liquid with appeal.

"In an hour," growled Hellman, moving on. That was his answer to the look, and his mercy was that he neglected to help himself to an apple, as Strongburger had done. But perhaps Hellman did not care for apples.

Patiently, painstakingly, with dejection etched in every line of his face, Moritz took down his outer row of boxes and carried them inside, but the bare rack still projected, and even one empty tomato box beyond the four feet and three inches allowed by law would be excuse enough for Hellman. Therefore, Wiener the carpenter was employed to cut the rack in two, but though he and his boy finished their task as rapidly as possible, the regular current of business had now been so much interrupted, disturbed, and deflected that closing time that night found the merchant's stock of unsold perishables on hand so large as to be alarming. Moritz, however, was given to hope. The next day was Sunday and Sunday was a great shopping day in the Ghetto. It was especially good for the vendor

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

7

of fruit, for many workingmen were idle and had the money to buy. Moreover, it was a day upon which the populace was accustomed to grant itself the indulgence of small luxuries.

Besides, while all the stores were open on Sunday, it was not the custom to display one's goods upon the sidewalk; so much of a concession was made to the Gentiles' law. Therefore, Moritz would be once more upon an even footing with his fellow merchants, so he smiled confidently. In the night, moreover, the idea for a stroke of unusual enterprise visited Rosenscweig's pillow. Next morning he delivered the stroke by dragging out a small graphophone from the family living room in the rear and put Rachel to the winding and changing that was necessary to keep the little pest wheezing. The effect was good. It made passers-by stop, look, and listen. Then they smiled and followed the lure. Once they were inside, Moritz attended to the business of salesmanship. By nine o'clock business was "fair." By ten it was brisk. From ten-fifteen onward Moritz had no longer time to rub his hands together complacently. But at ten forty-five a huge blue shadow darkened the door.

"What are you doin' here open on Sunday?" demanded Strongburger. "Don't you know the law? Look here, Moritz," and a brutal fist appeared beneath the little Hebrew's nose. "I been havin' trouble enough with you. You're pinched right now."

The Strongburger hand secured a hold on the loose folds of the Rosenscweig collar, and the little man was jerked with unnecessary violence over a pile of apple boxes and through the line of his stampeding customers to the door.

"Please wait a minute till I get m. my hat, please!" whined Rosenscweig.

"You should," conceded Strongburger dryly, and when some excited customer passed over that article of apparel from where it hung on the same hook with a garland of garlic, the officer himself jammed it down

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

on the head of his prisoner. Then he marched little Moritz toward the patrol box at the corner. Rachel, wailing and protesting, followed as far as the front door, where she halted, distraught between love for her husband and frugal concern for the little stock which might dwindle astonishingly if her back were turned for a moment.

Strongburger rang for the wagon and while he waited a small crowd gathered. Moritz sulked in silence, asking no questions, voicing no protests. What was the use? But Rachel continued to lift her lamentations on the air and so loudly that they were heard by a young man some distance up the block. This young man was of medium height and athletic figure, with features slightly florid and hair so auburn that the urdiscriminating might have called it red. He was decorously dressed in a black derby hat, a cutaway coat, and gray-striped trousers. By the token of these clothes the young man was alien to the neighbourhood, and by token of that stubborn manner in which his advancing feet were planted, as he sniffed and gazed about him, his consciousness was being assailed at every step by that which shocked his sensibilities and roused his disapproval.

The name of this young stranger was Jeremiah Thomas Archer, and his presence here this morning was due entirely to his normal and proper interest in things religious. The rich generally believe in religion for the poor; it gives them hope. Besides, it is well that they should be taught the commandments, especially "Thou shalt not covet" and "Thou shalt not steal." "Oh, brother Jerry," the Rev. Doctor Keightley had said, calling Jeremiah on the phone approximately one hour earlier. "There is to be an important meeting of the board of our Italian Mission before their service this morning. I want some representative of our church there to assure them of our coöperation and sympathy in the new building operation. Could you go?"

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“‘Coward!’ snorted Jeremiah Thomas Archer. ‘What did you hit that little man for?’”

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"Why, certainly, Doctor, I'll drive round there on my way to church."

Doctor Keightley coughed.

"No, not the motor, if you please, Jerry," suggested the good man delicately. "We have to be very careful not to make any ostentatious display in connection with our work down there. It—it seems to rub some of our friends the wrong way."

"Oh, why—all right," and Jerry laughed good-naturedly. "I'll jump on the street car then."

"If you would. Thank you so much." The phone was hung up with the well-bred tones of Doctor Keightley's voice still echoing in Jerry's ear.

So here was Jerry walking through a part of the city most unfamiliar to himself, and greatly distressed to find the stores on either side open and conducting a thriving mercantile business upon the Lord's Day.

"Isn't there such a thing as law in Philadelphia?" demanded Jerry of his intelligence. His intelligence said there was, but just at this moment he brought up before the wailing Rachel.

"My—my good woman," and Jerry lifted his hat. "You appear to be in distress."

The young man's round blue eyes looked sympathy at the same moment that his frown expressed reproof for the making of all this ill-bred clatter on the Sabbath. This expression of reproof brought into prominence other of Jerry's facial assets, for it clamped a straight, clean mouth and pushed forward a round knobby chin with a dimple in it so large that it amounted virtually to a cleft. "All kinds of determination in that chin," a physiognomist would say, "especially when you take that strong straight nose into account." Yet until something roused him Jeremiah Thomas Archer's features were just clean-cut and pleasant, with the sort of twinkle in the eye that reveals a native humour in the soul, and the kind of a smile on the lips that reflects a glad and buoyant nature.

"I would gif my head to be cut off, Moritz ain't done

nothing wrong," responded the woman, pausing in her wailing to make estimate through tears of the sort of person who was addressing her.

Seeing no Moritz, for the patrol box with its policeman, its prisoner, and its little knot of curious bystanders was just out of sight around the corner, Jerry looked his need of further enlightenment.

"My Gott! Dey pinched my husband to jail," quavered Rachel, tears and lamentations beginning once more.

"Ah, yes," sympathized Jerry, doubtful what to do or say. The woman's husband was some kind of law-breaker, no doubt. Yet he, a Christian man, on his way to a service of the church, ought to be able to extend some sort of consolation.

"Per—perhaps I might help if you would tell me what your husband did," volunteered Jerry.

"He did not do nothin'," affirmed Rachel vehemently. "Yesterday they asked him he should cover up the fruit," and Rachel began a mournful cataloguing of her woes.

"But that is the law," suggested Jeremiah Thomas Archer to her impressively, for he had a great respect for law.

"Und de stand, dey make him cut it in half and take it away."

"But that, too, is the law."

Rachel waved a despairing hand down the streets at the permanent racks in front of every store, bare to-day, but their outlines mute witness to how recklessly the ordinance was disregarded.

"And to-day, de best day in de veek, dey arrest him, so he does no business attall!"

"But—but," Jerry tried to be gentle. "To keep open on Sunday is against the law. It is very wrong." What Rachel would have replied to consolation like this will never be known, for the clang of the approaching patrol wagon sounded and drew her from the door to the curb where she could see her husband and call

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

11

to him. Jerry, following her eyes, for the first time discerned the little knot of people clustered about the patrol box and drew near curiously, but with heartbeat quickening at glimpsing another scene in this wretched bit of drama. Meantime the imminence of his departure roused Moritz into calling back some sort of instructions to his wife about the closing of the store and the care of the stock.

"Rachell Yes! Rachell!" he shouted and twisted about in an effort to make out her face beyond the scene of bystanders. This unexpected movement released the lax fingers of Strongburger, whose eye and mind were on the approaching wagon, till startled by finding his hand suddenly empty.

"Resist an officer, will yuh?" he barked, and retaking the prisoner with his left hand, the club in his right hand described a very small arc and stopped abruptly against the little Jew's head. It was not a hard blow, as blows of the locust go. It merely staggered the prisoner and opened up a crack in his scalp from which a stream of crimson trickled downward to his collar.

"Please, Mr. Officer, he didn't go to pull away, my Moritz didn't," screamed Rachel excitedly.

"Coward!" snorted Jeremiah Thomas Archer.

"What did you hit that little man for?"

"Who the blazes are you?" demanded Strongburger, and impudently lifted his club, as if he would slap it backward into the face of the unknown young man who had challenged him so boldly.

Jeremiah was already excited. Indignant wrath burned in his veins. This impudence, this insult, was one which his nature did not permit him to endure. His arms flew up; the club was waved aside as if it had been a paper sceptre and the right fist of Jerry shot out and landed. Had it been a hard blow it would have knocked the policeman down. It was not. It was only an excited blow, aimed by the instinct of a man suddenly angry, and it merely stung and cut the Strongburger lip.

The officer retaliated with his club, but Jerry dodged and stung the official mouth again, then, shifting his attack, he smote the patrolman's stomach, evoking a savage grunt; but about this time Strongburger's club found its target and the head of Jerry reeled under a blow that suggested to his mind the impact of a stroke of lightning. He dropped to his knees.

It was strange, but in this moment the young man's most vivid consciousness was of a woman's scream and his vision photographed somewhere outside the circle which surrounded him a beautiful girl covering her eyes with her hand—a girl whom he had not seen before. His main business, however, just now, was the business of combat. Staggering upward he aimed another fist, but sustained, instead, a second crashing blow—this time from behind—telling that reinforcements had arrived. This stroke sent the young man helpless to the cobbles and as he lapsed into unconsciousness he was experiencing the sensation of being trampled under foot by stampeding mules. As a matter of fact, this was merely the amiable kicking of a policeman's number twelve feet, into his stomach, his back, and his sides. Presently Jerry was dead even to this sensation.

He heard no more of the hysteric clamourings of Rachel. He did not know that Moritz, before mounting to his seat in the wagon, turned a sidewise glance of grateful sympathy on the rumpled heap in the gutter; neither did he know that thereafter his own battered form was tossed in at the little Jew's feet, nor that the officer in charge of the wagon had thereupon called out—"P.H."—to the man on the driver's seat. Had he been conscious he would not have understood that "P.H." was police for Pennsylvania Hospital, but he was not conscious, and so there was nothing to worry about at all on his account until dinner time rolled round in the expensive home of Henry Trowbridge Archer, which was located in the beautiful and fashionable suburb of Overbrook.

CHAPTER II

AN EMPTY CHAIR

HENRY TROWBRIDGE ARCHER, it might be written on the screen at this point, was by way of being a first citizen. His line went back in Philadelphia 200 years. His family were a part of its most exclusive society. He held membership in its most distinctive clubs. He was a director of trust companies, a vice-president of banks, a trustee of educational and philanthropic institutions. His integrity was as notable as the temper of his steel, for Mr. Archer's business was manufacturing and his product was edged tools. Archer tools were of the sort that gave reputation to Philadelphia manufacturers. They went far; they bored tunnels in India; they chiselled out the beds of railroads in the rockbound Andes; they mined for diamonds in Africa; they made Cannon for England and France—Germany, too, perhaps—and they figured in the vast shipbuilding programme of Uncle Samuel, for wherever hard steel must be shaved like cheese Archer tools were relied upon to do the shaving.

Five generations of Archers had been perfecting these tools, and the Archers had come to be like them. They were keen, blue-steel aristocrats of men; true to God—as they knew him; true to business principles—as commonly accepted in Philadelphia; thrifty, cultured, not given to display. They might have made a great deal more money than they did. They could have recapitalized and expanded and branched out long ago. But they hadn't. That is, they hadn't up to now; but a change was upon them.

Henry Trowbridge Archer, with a modest million or

two in his business, and perhaps another modest million invested in readily convertibles, was preparing to lean back and take his ease when he made the uncomfortable discovery that ease was not to be permitted. This was on account of the character of the fifth generation of Archers. His two sons were somehow variants in the line. Paul John Archer, thirty-two and the elder, exhibited something like money lust. A million was nothing to him. He wanted many millions. Jerry, on the other hand, twenty-nine and the younger, cared nothing for money, but was enormously capable and bubbling with unsapped energies. Modest, conscientious, human, likable, Jerry had driving power and organizing ability. With Paul to propose and Jerry to achieve they made a most effective team.

It was, therefore, solely to provide scope for the ambitions of one son and the business abilities of the other that old Henry T., in the year when he had meant to retire, found himself engaged in the refinancing of the Archer Tool Works and laying out plans for a new factory that would double the old one in capacity.

But turning now from the business projects of the Archers to the family itself: there was the Sunday dinner spread, and there was the one chair empty and unexplained. The sight of it worried Henry Archer, though his pride would not have confessed it for the world, and he tried to keep the conversation on other things; but Susan Archer, woman-like, mother-like, kept bringing everybody's mind back to the interrogation point.

"Jerry was never detained before without telephoning," she remarked for the hundredth time. "I do wish he had gone in the car. They would rob a man for fifteen cents down there in those river wards."

"Don't worry, mother," urged Constance, the twenty-two-year-old daughter. "Jerry can take care of himself anywhere. Nobody could hurt him."

"Rob? Hurt? What are you two women talking about?" interrogated Mr. Archer, with some slight

show of irritation. "As if a man on his way to church on Sunday morning were not perfectly safe in any part of the city."

"Of course, it's quite absurd," agreed Constance, "but mother looks so worried I don't know whether to laugh at her or to console."

Mrs. Archer, however, did not lower any colours to her husband's rebuking glance, and read his mood more truly than he suspected.

"There was that dreadful murder a few weeks ago down there," she argued, "and one reads so much about misgovernment, protection to thieves and all that sort of thing, these days."

"Newspaper exaggerations!" stormed Mr. Archer. "Slanders! Slanders on our city. Nothing less."

Looking at each member of his family in succession to make sure they understood that the head of it had spoken officially and ex-cathedra, he let his glance wander complacently out the wide window, and across broad lawns to the rustic stone wall which inclosed the Archer mansion and gave it part of its air of comfortable exclusiveness. Beyond this the owner's glance reached on to other lawns and other stone walls and other comfortably exclusive mansions—sights which sufficiently typified the entire atmosphere in which the Archer family life was lived and gave excuse for that assumption of security wherein they dwelt. As his butler helped him to a second slice of the toothsome roast, Mr. Archer could hardly understand the point of view of any who maintained that the established order in Philadelphia was not the preferred and approximately perfected order.

When the meal was over the atmosphere of mid-autumn tempted to the open air and Henry and his son Paul adjourned to the wide veranda and composed their minds for such contemplation as became a day of worship. Physically Paul was a paler and taller edition of his brother, but with a cynic expression on his thinner features and a more calculating disposition.

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

"Christianity is the leaven that will redeem the world," reflected the father, as if some dregs of that suggestion of his wife about misgovernment lingered still in his mind. "That and education. I'm sending another \$5,000 to-morrow to the China Inland Mission."

"What appeals to me about modern missions," suggested Paul, by the way of taking up his father's lead, "is that they not only save the heathen hereafter but they save 'em now. They make good farmers of 'em, good mechanics, good citizens. They teach 'em how to get the best out of life." Being himself inclined to value most that which he could hold in his hand, this was a perfectly natural emphasis for Paul, but further pursuance of the subject was precluded by the darting into the yard of a saucy little blue automobile with a somewhat saucy-looking female figure at the helm. Deep blue eyes peered out from under a small hat brim which the green automobile veil drew close, and other glimpses of colour were afforded by the flush of rose upon oval cheeks and the gleam of white, smiling teeth.

"Where's Jerry?" was demanded somewhat imperiously. "He was going to telephone me."

"Why, we don't know, Ruth," responded Paul, hurrying down to the side of the car. "We thought he might have gone to your house."

By this time Henry T. Archer was himself at the foot of the steps and doing something like obeisance at the side of the snappy little car. Obeisance was right and proper, too, for Ruth Buckingham queened it over the local aristocracy. Her line was ancient, going back to that first shipload of Philadelphians, and the fortune of which she was sole heiress went into the millions. The relation between Ruth and Jerry had not been defined as yet. She liked him and in her charming, willful way exercised proprietary authority. He loved her and in his humorously persistent fashion assumed the ground of a relationship which no word of hers had yet justified, but behind the assumption his heart trembled and leaped. Caring nothing for money, he

cared everything for Ruth. He would have fought for her though she had not a dollar, and he was jealous of her money as of something that raised a bar between them.

"Jerry went down to attend a board meeting of the Italian mission this morning, and he hasn't returned," enlarged Paul.

"I had half a suspicion that you had kidnapped him and carried him off to Glen Arden," volunteered Mr. Archer into the majestic silence which Queen Ruth maintained. In mentioning Glen Arden Mr. Archer had suggested the name of the most favoured out-of-town residence of the Buckingham family located out on the Old York road, far enough away to be immersed in the country and near enough to the city to make all its affairs swiftly accessible to flying motor-cars.

But the tone in which Mr. Archer had spoken conveyed to that young woman that he began to be distinctly anxious about his son. She forgot to be Queen Ruth any more and became just a girl concerned over the whereabouts and well-being of a valued play-fellow.

"But I didn't, Mr. Archer," she declared with a ring of conviction in her voice and round, inquiring eyes. "I didn't. He was to telephone me and he hasn't. Why, what—where——" Ruth was beginning to alarm herself.

At this juncture Mrs. Archer appeared on the porch in search of her husband and wringing her hands.

"Doctor Keightley has just phoned to inquire about Jerry. It seems he didn't get to the board meeting at all," she announced with white lips.

At this news Henry Archer's face betrayed something like consternation, but he did not speak. For a moment there was straining silence, broken by Ruth.

"Why—why, something must have happened to Jerry!" she exclaimed in a frightened gasp.

"Something surely has," decided Paul.

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

"Whatever shall we do?" wailed Mrs. Archer.

"Notify the police. Have them comb the neighbourhood 'that church,'" was Paul's proposal.

"No . . . father!" ejaculated Ruth, as if by the utterance of that word she invoked the ultimate power.

To the girl her father was a superman. And not to her alone. The president of several great manufacturing corporations, chairman of the boards of others, director in too many to count, sire of banks and trust companies, godfather of philanthropic and eelymosynary and educational institutions, a man whom people, trusting once, had learned to trust again until vast fiduciary responsibilities had been heaped and pyramided on his head—Willard H. Buckingham loomed in the community.

To the daughter his was a strength which had never yet been tested. His arm, his voice had never failed her. He would speak and the purlieus of the city's slums would give up the person of her Jerry and the secret of his temporary sequestration.

"I am going straight to him," declared Ruth, gripping the wheel.

Once that name was invoked, the Archers abandoned all thought of other agencies as if it were some sort of *lèse majesté*, and Paul advertised their complete acquiescence in Ruth's proposal by stepping in beside the girl. With an indignant snort, like the protest of a high-bred horse at the sudden and violent application of the spur, the little blue car leaped forward, swung out of the yard, tore down the wide boulevard, and quickened speed still more for its dash into the country. Motor policemen trailed from time to time till they made out the license number, recognizing which they dropped back respectfully.

By way of introducing Buckingham personally, it might be said that he looked his position, even that exalted position which his daughter's faith and the popular imagination ascribed to him. He stood six

feet tall, his brow was full and high, his eyes of diluted blue were large and rather carefully housed in a smooth face of heroic cast.

It was obvious that nature when she formed Buckingham had meant to make a kingly man, and only the most discerning would have gained from the present state of these features a hint that something might have spoiled the job. From Buckingham's own point of view, however, he had fully justified nature. Born a man, he had become an institution. Endowed as an individual, he had made himself a huge human trusteeship! Yet, notwithstanding such sublime achievements, the man bore his mightiness, he hoped, with becoming modesty, and tried valiantly to conceive of himself as a perfectly regular sort of person—husband, father, citizen—all that sort of thing. Much of the time, too, he succeeded, though the kingly assumption was likely at any moment to crop out.

This afternoon the great man was in fatherly mood. His large face lighted at the sight of his daughter and displayed a quizzical, half-teasing smile as he marked her perturbation. Her obviously excited demeanour created, however, no corresponding flurry in his own breast. Buckingham, after the traditions of his strain and his religion, venerated calm. He did not permit himself easily to be disturbed by slight things—especially by unperceived things.

"Father! . . . Father!" panted the girl, and, with her eyes blazing excitement and alarm, she told of the supposed mysterious disappearance of Jeremiah Thomas Archer.

Mr. Buckingham was a man who thought quickly and acted instantly. Moreover, he was one who held his vast resources at immediate command.

"Higgins, get Edmunds on the phone," he directed.

Edmunds might be described as an unofficial official. He had no place in the city administration, and an uncertain one in the organization; and yet Edmunds was necessary. He was a sort of button that Mr. Buck-

ingham was accustomed to push when he wanted certain kinds of things accomplished.

The butler's air of habitual obedience was one that could hardly have been disturbed into protest had the order been, "Higgins, get God on the phone."

"Yes, Mr. Buckingham," he responded, and bowed himself out with that combination of self-effacement and dignity which is the hallmark of your well-trained house servant.

Edmunds, it presently appeared, was enjoying his day of rest at Atlantic City; but this was nothing at all to Higgins. He persisted, and shortly came in to offer to the hand and ear of his master the transmitter and the receiver of the telephone.

"Ah-hum, Edmunds. Mr. Buckingham talking." Following this announcement came no apology for disturbing a busy man's rest upon the day of rest; but instead, short, sharp, terse statement of the business in hand. "A young friend of mine, Mr. Jeremiah Thomas Archer, twenty-nine years old, medium height, florid complexion, red hair——"

"Auburn!" interrupted Ruth indignantly, "you know it's a very dark auburn."

"—disappeared rather mysteriously this morning between his home in Cverbrook and the Italian Mission over in the Fourth Ward. He went on the street car and would be walking across from Chestnut Street likely enough. Will you be kind enough to have him located for me at once. At once!"

So spoke the absolute. So the button was pressed.

"At once, Mr. Buckingham," responded the button, the wires heavy with the honeyed obsequiousness of this assurance.

"Thank you, Edmunds," said Mr. Buckingham, and the phone was hung up with that air of decision, of so much settled, which characterized all Mr. Buckingham's transactions. Turning to his daughter he suggested drily: "Before I can get word from Edmunds you will probably hear from your auburn Adonis at some country

club or other, or learn that he forgot the mission and went off on a yachting party with some of his cronies."

Ruth, after this unburdening of her fears, had experienced a feeling of relief and absorbed something of assurance from that vast, calm strength which emanated from her father's presence.

"Don't tease," she protested. "Oh, you're such a comfort, dad!" The girl kissed her father impulsively upon the cheek and then, while he nursed his cigar and stared into distance as became one with vast concerns upon his mind, she snuggled in a huge, opposing chair and fell to gazing at him with an expression of rapt faith in one whose powers had never failed her and whose favour had never been withheld.

"I appear to have become superfluous," suggested Paul, by the way of reminding the two of them that he lingered on the scene.

"Oh, Paul, forgive me!" exclaimed Ruth, turning on him those blue bewitching eyes which seemed to carry with them the assurance that her owner must always obtain forgiveness or whatever dole she sought.

"We shall all become superfluous the moment your brother is rediscovered and taken possession of," commented Mr. Buckingham, turning a placid, even a benignant eye on Paul, for he liked the Archer boys. They were such clean, strong-looking, capable fellows, so self-contained, so representative of that older strain of Philadelphia blood which was now beginning to scatter widely and in some instances to be crowded out by blustering, hustling, noisy young men from outside—or from down below—good enough business men, shrewd, honest, capable, driving, but—noisy, loud of voice, loud of manner, loud of dress, loud in their self-assertion. The Archer boys were not like this, Paul especially. As for Jerry—well, Mr. Buckingham, shrewd assayer of the souls of men, had not entirely made up his mind about Jerry. He suspected the presence of an unknown quantity, but anyhow he liked the chap. Who could blame him? Who didn't like Jerry Archer?

CHAPTER III

RESCUERS RESCUED

MONSIEUR DEVAN idled before the rail of the booking sergeant in a down-town police station. M. Devan was without official position in the city, but he occupied a highly important position in the civic fabric of his ward. He was the professional bail-giver of the Carey faction.

At half-past eleven o'clock, besought by wifely tears and wailings, he had hurried to the station, accompanied by Michael Kelly, division leader, and secured the release from custody of Moritz Rosenscweig by giving bond for the citizen's future appearance. By this act, needless to say, Kelly and Devan considered that they had cemented the soul of Rosenscweig to the cause of Jimmie Carey for as long as the Jew should have a soul, or at least for as long as Carey should have a cause.

But thereafter, M. Devan still lingered, and thereafter also, Magistrate Parry, likewise of the Carey faction, continued to loiter about, as prepared to do yet another service. This was because rumour had whispered to Division Leader Kelly of a stranger in the ward who had interfered in behalf of their clansman Rosenscweig, to the extent of smiting the arresting officer twice upon the mouth. Rumour related further that the said stranger had thereupon been vigorously assaulted with a club or clubs—to such an extent, in fact, that while the patrol wagon was taking Moritz to the police station and a thirty-minute sojourn behind the bars, an ambulance was taking the wounded one to an emergency hospital. Presently the wounded one would be shunted back to the station to be booked upon

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

23

a charge of assaulting an officer. It was for this fact that M. Devan and Michael Kelly waited outside the rail and that Magistrate Parry waited within the rail prepared to accept the bail that would be proffered, and affix his seal to that copy of the charges upon which the sergeant would release the prisoner; for that a friend of Rosensweig was a friend of Carey, and therefore to be taken care of as such, was but a kindergarten form of political reasoning.

About on schedule Jerry appeared, pale in the face, uncertain in the knees, and having his poll swathed in bandages till it resembled a Moslem's turban; besides which he bore other traces of his recent encounter with Strongburger's club. His collar, erstwhile immaculate, was soaked with blood and ran like a soggy red ribbon round his neck; his shirt was also incarnadined, and the white bosom striped with red like a barber's pole; while rusty stains marked where the life fluid had splashed in rivulets down upon the shoulders and front of his coat. In fact, Jerry gave evidence that he had shed considerable blood in what one less chivalrous than he must certainly have regarded as a doubtful cause. Notwithstanding all of this, however, the younger man was not so badly off, thanks to his vigorous constitution. True, his head was buzzing, but as much with anger as with pain.

"What's name?" demanded the sergeant.

"J. T. Archer," blurted the prisoner, and immediately a flood of wrath at the memory of what had been done to Jeremiah Thomas Archer darkened that thoroughbred mind for a moment. Eventually, however, things cleared somewhat and two ideas stood up sharply in consciousness. The first was that some kind of disgrace had come upon him, the knowledge of which must be carefully kept from his friends; the second was that he was entirely surrounded by enemies, the desk sergeant, that extra man sitting beside him, the policeman who had him in custody—all these were enemies. They were representatives of something

dark and sinister, the existence of which in his native Philadelphia he had never suspected before.

That men could be so unfeeling that any one could handle him so indifferently as had, for instance, that young snip of an interne who had mechanically shaved the hair from the edges of his wounds, washed and disinfected them with biting antiseptics, and plastered or stitched them with the merest suggestion of a local anesthetic—that was a thing Jerry would hitherto have deemed impossible. As already averred, the memory of it angered its victim, but it roused also a stubborn streak in him. He might have voiced his father's name and the heraldic designs upon the family escutcheon in the way of dollar marks, but pride and discretion both forbade this. Instead he answered the remainder of the sergeant's questions with careful conservatism, not to say, with dissimulation.

"Take 'im back," directed the sergeant mechanically, when the details were on the slate. Ominous words! "Back" meant that gloomy wall of steel of which Jerry had caught a glimpse as they brought him into the station. He maddened freshly at the thought. An Archer to the common jail!

"Here, Magistrate! I go for him the bail!" announced one of two strangers standing outside the rail. Jerry turned on them surprised, and scrutinized each sharply. He had never seen either before. To him they had been but links in the chain of alien enemies that surrounded him. Now he perceived they were friends. Their act so stamped them. Instinctively he reached out a hand to the foreign-looking man who had proffered bail, but M. Devan avoided the compliment, being then intent upon the matter of his business with the magistrate, who, nodding recognition, was busily preparing the bond for his signature.

Michael Kelly's business, however, was with the human element. He took the outstretched hand of Jeremiah Thomas Archer and led him through the rail to freedom.

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“‘Higgins, get Edmunds on the phone,’ Buckingham directed”

"Some belt you stopped, old man," vouchsafed Michael, looking him over critically. "Want to go home? Tell me where you live and I'll send you home."

"I don't want to go home," announced Jeremiah stubbornly. "I want to go some place where I can lie down and think. I'm so mad I see red. That's the most that's the matter with me right now."

"You're seasick from that wallop," sympathized Kelly. "Come on over to the club and lay down a while. A couple hours on your back will fix you all right. Then we'll send you home."

"You're very kind, Mr.— Mr.—"

"Kelly's my name. Michael Kelly, division leader for Jimmie Carey. Come on over to the club."

Leaving M. Devan to attend to his part of the transaction and leading what he took for a prospective recruit to Carey's cause from the very arms of a disappointed-looking officer who, in true police fashion, was planning further reprisals against a man who had dared assail the uniform, Kelly conducted him to a three-story house in the neighbourhood on the front door of which was painted, "Lafayette Club." Possibly some habituê of the place could have explained the significance of such a name for such an institution, but more probably not.

Jerry's curious eyes found the lower floor of the Lafayette Club furnished with large chairs, leather lounges, and gorgeously figured carpets, and affording in general brave approximation of the appearance of much more ambitious establishments. Among these furnishings was a sideboard that was almost a bar. The second floor appeared to house more lounging or sitting or card rooms—whatever they might be termed—and through one half-open door Jerry caught a glimpse of men gathered in close conference, with hats pulled low over their eyes. On the third floor were bedrooms, and to one of these Jerry, with heavy feet, was led, and once upon his back, despite all the din from below stair

and the stench of bad cigar smoke and unsterilized humanity which tainted the atmosphere, he relapsed immediately into slumber.

This slumber lasted while Sunday morning worship was concluded in the various churches of the city and the worshippers went home. It lasted while a Sunday dinner dragged through an anxious hour at Overbrook, while a young lady in an automobile dashed madly over the country, while Mr. Buckingham issued his mandate to the pushbutton, Edmunds, and while the latter set police wires humming. It ended when Jerry was aroused rudely by the bodily pain which resulted from an unconscious effort to turn upon his side. Memory came back slowly and the young man lay quite still, congratulating himself that his head had cleared and wondering what it was that could have made his ribs and back so sore.

How long had he slept, was another query, and his watch answered more intelligently than his ribs. Approximately four hours, probably, since it was now half-past three. Other ruminations followed. Who was this man Kelly and the Frenchy-looking big fellow who had said, "I go for him the bail"? Why had they done it? Why had they taken him to the Lafayette Club, and what was the Lafayette Club, anyway?

Still muddling over these questions and others like them, although with the subconscious feeling that presently he must get up, prepare his people by telephone for what had happened to him, and go about getting home, Jerry found his meditations broken in upon by the sound of hesitant footsteps on the stairs, followed by scraps of low-toned conversation outside his door.

"That's who it is, all the same," was the first whole sentence that Jerry made out.

"Then you're sure out of luck to-day, Jake," taunted the other speaker. "You beat him up somethin' artistic."

Both voices were faintly familiar.

"How the blazes would I know who he was?" demanded the first speaker in hurt tones. "Besides, he hit me."

Jerry listened with anger mounting as the speaker identified himself.

"You want to be a little more careful about clubbin' our people," blustered the party of the second part, who, of course, was Kelly.

"Your people?" The scorn of Strongburger was thick and withering. "This guy ain't your people. He's just a soft-hearted boob that butted in. At that I'm liable to be broke for it," and the tone became hurt again.

Jerry's wrath sputtered and exploded,

"Broke is nothing at all to what I am going to do to you," he called out, his feet feeling uncertainly for the floor and his hand going involuntarily to his head as a throb of pain accompanied its sudden lifting from the pillow.

"How'd I know who you was?" reproached Policeman Strongburger coming through the door, alarm growing on his face as he saw the spectacle his victim afforded. "How'd I know the little Jew was a friend of yours?"

"Friend of mine?" objected Jerry, breaking into a flood of angry denunciation. "Any man is a friend of mine that I see being persecuted, abused, and assaulted by a brute like you. You big beast! Don't you know you are an officer of the law? That you are there to protect people—not assault them?"

"Don't you know that little man hasn't been in this country long? That he comes to a land that stands for liberty and justice? That he is living under the very shadow of Independence Hall, where the proposition that all men are created free and equal was first declared to the world? You are the symbol of that proclamation to this man and others like him. He doesn't see the President of the United States; he doesn't see the Governor or the Mayor. He sees you;

and you are persecuting him. You drive him to cover his fruit, and drive him to take it off the sidewalks; you arrest him for keeping open on Sundays; while all around him he sees fruit uncovered, goods on the sidewalk, stores open on Sunday unmolested, and——”

“But, Mr. Archer——”

“Don’t you dare to interrupt me,” threatened Jerry, holding his head with one hand and waving the index finger of the other menacingly at the abashed policeman. “Don’t you dare till I’ve said what I’ve got to say to you.”

Now to confess the truth, Jerry was rather surprised at the high plane on which his indignation had broken out. Words were coming easily to him, and ideas, and he had no mind to be cut off in midflow of an eloquence like this. Besides, it was relieving him greatly.

Michael Kelly, meanwhile, smiled to see Strongburger “getting his,” and stared in over the officer’s shoulder, regarding both the matter and the impetuosity of Jerry’s speech indulgently, as if they were the result of those blows upon the head, and yet he knew there was a kind of sense in the words, though to his practical nature the point of view seemed highly extravagant.

But Jerry was going on now:

“You make the Declaration of Independence a lie to that man. You make your uniform a badge of oppression. That’s what the law and the uniform has been to this man’s ancestors for hundreds of years—an instrument of tyranny—a means of oppression. This man is a child in his experience with democracy. You should make it your care to be giving him a lesson in the greatness, the justness, the benevolence of republics. Instead, you teach him that republics are unjust, that the law and the police force, established to protect, may be actually employed to persecute him. You teach him desperation. You will make him a criminal, an anarchist, a lawless person—as lawless as you are yourself.”

Jerry made a final flourish with his arms and sat

gripping the sides of the bed with his hands. His flight had ceased. He was finished, empty, breathless, wordless—but he continued to regard the officer sternly.

"I only done what I was told," Strongburger argued weakly, for he was overwhelmed by the torrent of language and cowed by the blazing indignation with which his victim regarded him, as well as still shaken by what he had just learned at the station regarding that victim's identity.

"Told?" and Jerry flared up again. "Who told you to persecute this inoffensive little Jew? And what are you doing it for? Graft, I suppose. Because he did not disgorge two or three dollars a week for the privilege of violating the law."

"Graft? Naw! Not this time," grinned Kelly. "Politics! The lieutenant told him to do it."

"The lieutenant? Unthinkable!" Jerry, like his father, did not believe all that was printed in the newspapers.

"Sure thing!" insisted Kelly. "They was trying to make the Jew turn in for Deutsch."

"And who is Deutsch?" inquired Jerry.

"The new ward leader," boasted Strongburger.

"Ward leader?" sneered Kelly. "He's a renegade would-be, that's all. Worse'n that, he's a never-was—tryin' to take the ward away from Jimmie Carey that's been the leader for ten years and as white a Mick as ever left the old sod. He's given more coal to widows and shoes to children; he's got more men on the force and in the fire department for this ward than a guy like Deutsch could get if he was leader for a thousand years."

"I don't seem to quite grasp this leader business," said Jerry.

"Why, there's a leader in each voting division, you understand," explained Kelly, proud of his ability to enlighten, though a little wondering that enlightenment should be required by a gentleman of Mr. Archer's standing. "I'm the leader of the 21st division. Then

there's a big boss leader in the ward that all the division leaders in the organization report to."

"And this leader—what makes him a leader? How is he chosen? I don't understand that he is elected——"

"He's likely got a city job of some kind," went on Kelly, misunderstanding. "A man that didn't have pull enough to get a job for himself wouldn't be much good at getting jobs for anybody else. There was one time when they had a regular system figured out on the idea that every ward leader was entitled to \$3,600 a year, and if he didn't have a city job that figured that much they made the balance up to him out of the Organization."

"Organization? Just what do you mean concretely when you say organization?"

It seemed to Jerry as if he had come in contact with a practical politician for the first time in his life, and the incidents of the day minded him to learn something.

"Say, Mr. Archer," interjected Strongburger. "I'm nervous. Your folks are worrying about you and I want to get you home."

"My folks?" and Jerry turned on the policeman a horrified look.

"Mr. Buckingham's been telephoning' about you," explained the policeman. "Lieutenant Fish is scared stiff and so am I, if you want to know. He sent me to find you. We didn't know who you was, Mr. Archer. I didn't, and I hope you'll take that into——"

"Do my folks know what's happened to me?" demanded Jerry sternly. "Does Mr. Buckingham?"

"I reckon they don't yet. I've just been sent out to find you."

"In other words, you waited to see how badly off I was and how far you could go toward squaring me before you reported? Well, I'm not badly off at all and you can't square me. So much for that. Now you get to a telephone quick. Call up my mother—that'll take care of all the rest of 'em—tell her I've had a most

interesting experience and been detained down here where I couldn't communicate before. Say I'll be home in an hour, and don't let out one word of what you did to me."

The last part of this instruction encouraged Strong-burger somewhat. He interpreted it to mean that there was still hope of mollifying his victim, and he hurried off to telephone Mrs. Archer with the intention of returning immediately to take further soundings of the young man's disposition before reporting to Lieutenant Fish.

Jerry, meantime, had turned once more to Kelly.

"About the Organization?" he inquired.

"Gawn, Mr. Archer!" grimaced Kelly. "Everybody knows what the Organization is?"

"I confess I have only the vaguest notion," said Jerry. "Organization in politics never occurred to me until in the course of its operation a policeman's club landed on my head. Now I think my curiosity is pardonable."

The wide freckled face of Kelly was completely shattered by a comprehending grin, and he obliged in one breathless sentence.

"Why, if you dope it right out to the limit, the Organization is a committee in each division, with a leader, and then there's an executive committee in each ward, of which the ward leader is chairman; and all these ward committees make up the city committee, and there's an executive committee of the city committee, and generally two or three leaders claimin' to boss this executive committee, and all more or less doing it."

"Perfectly clear," smiled Jerry. "And this Organization has money, you say, so that it can pay salaries? Where does it get it?"

"Assessments. Every policeman, fireman, Judge, clerk——"

"School teacher?" broke in Jerry, thereby confessing to a certain sense of shock.

"I don't know about school teachers," admitted Kelly, with a smile. "They're a little bit out of my line, but up in the department, yes, you bet your life. Generally speakin', everybody that's got a job in the city gives up money to keep the Organization going or else some fine day they give up their job. And then," he concluded, "there are other ways the Organization has of getting money."

"For instance?" Jerry snapped out this interrogation so eagerly that a certain glumness overtook Kelly.

"I guess I won't say no more about that than what I have," he decided, cautiously, and went on to palliate by remarking: "Of course, it takes money to carry on this business, just like anything else."

"Only, for the life of me, I don't quite see what the business is," said Jerry. "It looks like an endless chain to me. Just what do I understand is the business of this Organization?"

Kelly knew perfectly, but floundered for a moment, being suddenly seized of a certain delicacy in putting the matter.

"Why—the business of the Organization is keepin' up the Organization, carryin' th' wards, electin' th' candidates, and . . . dealin' out the jobs!"

"Jobs?" Jerry had been caught by the grateful emphasis on this last item. "Jobs? Is that your idea of what government is for—jobs?"

Kelly gulped and then hurdled unblinkingly, "Ain't it yours?"

Jerry controlled himself. Here was a point of view too naïve to be startled out of focus by any violence on his part. He proceeded suavely to cross-examine further by asking:

"And you consider that the proper compensation for the work you do for the Organization is a job?"

"Yes, sir."

"And for the other men on up the line to the head the proper pay is—jobs?"

Kelly nodded.

"But these two or three rival bosses at the very apex, do they l. jobs?"

Kelly's head was shaken, and he further emphasized the negative by a wide curling of his lower lip.

"They get city contracts," he elucidated.

"Oh! They are the contractor-bosses we read about in the newspapers?"

"Mostly bunk what the papers say," opined Kelly.

"And they get their compensation through juicy contracts which the Organization, by its control of the city government, awards to them?"

"Sure!" declared Kelly, and he had to smile at the perfection of the system. "Sure! They got to get theirs some way, ain't they?"

"Get theirs?" Jerry, being alive and in the twentieth century in the United States of America, was acquainted with the phrase, but was curious to see how this division leader would embroider the idea.

"Why, yes," amplified Michael, readily enough. "Every man is entitled to his bit, ain't he? If some are smart enough to get theirs that way, lucky for them! Look at Smith! Got a pretty good little line of his own, don't you think? That bonding business?" and Kelly smiled again in sheer admiration. Jerry, however, thought he perceived a broken link in this essay on compensation.

"But the people?" he demanded, with sudden emphasis. "The common people of the city of Philadelphia, who pay the taxes that support this machine and supply the money for all these jobs and this contractor-profiteering—what do they get?"

"Why, they get protection," retorted Kelly, blandly.

"Protection?" Jerry's mind was groping.

"Yes, the tariff!"

The idea dawned slowly at first and disconcertingly, for the young manufacturer believed in a protective tariff as he believed in sunlight. In his eyes any instrumentality that helped to maintain that protective wall was necessarily sacrosanct.

"Oh," he murmured somewhat inanely. "And this organization we have been talking about is the Republican City Central Committee?"

"You know it!" was the vernacular response of the division leader.

"I didn't realize it," confessed the young man frankly. "I hadn't identified the two in my mind. Then the business of the Organization is to secure Republican majorities and elect Republican Congressmen and Senators so that the whole of Philadelphia's influence in a legislative way may be cast for a protective tariff?"

"That's better'n I can say it," conceded Kelly.

"But you didn't tell me that at first!" reproached Jerry.

"I forgot it," admitted Kelly with a smirk.

"And the Organization, in distributing jobs and contracts, merely pays itself well for attending to this matter of majorities for the tariff?" persisted the inquiring young man. "That is your idea?"

"That's all," agreed the leader.

Jerry was thoughtful for a moment, his mind breached by the suspicion that maybe these majorities came rather high. "With these people," he reflected, "the tariff is just camouflage. Political crookedness always hides itself behind the mask of something legitimate and proper. Even Tammy pretends to virtues." Then he went on aloud with:

"Now let me connect this up with what's happened to-day, Mr. Kelly. These rival ward leaders, Deutsch and Carey? They are both Republicans?"

"Sure thing."

"And you?" Jerry inquired, turning to Strong-burger who had returned from his telephoning and stood just inside the door awaiting developments—"You are using your club and your authority to make the people of this division vote for Deutsch for leader? Trying to take it away from Carey? A mere factional——"

"We are usin' our 'influence,'" qualified Strong-burger meticulously.

"They're usin' their sticks and jacks—that's what they're usin'," enlightened Kelly. "And Jimmie Carey as white a man as ever swung the ward."

"But both Carcy and Deutsch are spoilsmen."

"I don't get you," said Kelly, stiffly.

"They are both corrupt? Both have low ideals?"

Michael seemed to object to the words or to the connotations they raised in his mind. "You got some curves to your language that ain't used much down in the river wards," he frowned. "Carey and Deutsch are both practical men, if that's what you mean."

"Tell me," demanded Jerry. "Would Carey, if he 'had' the police, use them to intimidate a man like this wretched Rosensweig? Be frank now!"

"Naw," affirmed Kelly with assumptions of virtuous indignation. "Jim Carey never gave no man nothing but a——"

Officer Strongburger interrupted disconcertingly with:

"I've done as much police politics for Jimmie Carey as I ever did for anybody else."

"Yes, and he got you on the force, too," retorted Kelly, "and he kept you on the force when the gang was after your job, and this is the way you pay him back."

"Shut up! Shut up!" commanded Jeremiah Thomas Archer disgustedly. "You both make me sick. You have no more idea of what government is for than a dachshund pup. Let me out of here!"

Jerry balanced himself experimentally on his legs and found that, like his tongue, they were now quite serviceable.

"I never was in the Fifth Ward before to-day," he announced scornfully, "and it is my present intention never to enter it again. I'm much obliged to you, Mr. Kelly, for bailing me out, even if it was under misapprehension. I owe you personal gratitude for that, and you can cash in on it any time I can be of assistance to you in any proper way, Strongburger!" And Jerry confronted the officer squarely, truculently al-

most. "I'm not holding any personal grudge, but you are a coward and a brute. I shall prefer charges against you before the Department of Public Safety."

Michael Kelly laughed unfeelingly.

"You'll never get that far with 'em, Mr. Archer," he suggested. "They'll break poor old Jack before tomorrow morning to keep from having what they're doing shown up."

"Then if they do that, Strongburger, come to my factory and I'll put you to work at better wages than you're making here, and give you a chance to be a man if you want to. But mind; I have no respect for you whatever now."

The only remark of which the officer was capable was an embarrassed cough.

"Do I happen to have—does any one remember anything about my hat?"

"I put it in the wagon," insisted Strongburger.

"It must have been left at the hospital."

"I reckon we could dig you up a hat round the club," volunteered Kelly.

"Thanks! And will you call a taxicab for me?" asked Jerry.

The division leader obliged in both these particulars.

CHAPTER IV

A LILY IN THE MUD

JERRY, however, was not yet done with his experience in the Fifth Ward. The taxicab was drawn up immediately in front and it was only a half-dozen steps from the door of the Lafayette Club to the privacy of the vehicle's interior, yet in those half-dozen steps the young man was intercepted. What intervened between him and his goal was a slender, girlish figure with a face that would have attracted attention anywhere, and brown, expressive eyes that he instantly recognized as the ones which, with a look of terrible shock in them, he had seen suddenly screened by a hand as he went down under the first of Strongburger's blows, and it was she, of course, who had screamed in pity for him.

The young woman was hatless, as indicating that she came from somewhere round the neighbourhood, and she advanced impulsively and exclaimed with fervour:

"Oh, thank you, sir, for what you did. It will make Strongburger more careful with his club next time. I hope you are not badly hurt."

The warmth of sympathy in the girl's face and voice, the unassuming naturalness of her manner, the attractiveness of the mobile features with their high contrasts of colouring—these and the sheer littleness of her, combined to throw Jerry into a mood exceedingly tender and susceptible. Besides, this note of womanly appreciation was grateful to him.

"No, not hurt," he assured her, lifting his hat after a moment of groping, though not finding the brim where it had been assumed to be, on account of the

bandages. "And I am very grateful indeed to you for speaking to me."

With those dark, lustrous eyes streaming the light of a new and altogether charming personality into his, Jerry stood hesitating while a sort of reconstruction of intents and purposes went on within his mind. He had been going away disgusted—with Strongburger, with Kelly, with himself—yet the mere existence of one such heavenly creation as this was sufficient to redeem instantly the whole Fifth Ward in his eyes. It made it a place that was worth concerning one's self further about.

"And may I ask your name?" he inquired, by the way of getting acquainted.

"Sylvy Aurentsky," she responded with a frank smile. "My father keeps the grocery over there."

Jerry, boldly assuming a fatherly air, extended both hands cordially, not to say effusively.

"Mine," he said, "is Jeremiah Thomas Archer. A good deal of name, isn't it?"

"Well," and the girl blushed prettily, "I think it's a good deal of man, too."

"Ah! I thank you," laughed Jerry, enjoying the compliment as he had enjoyed the warm clasp of Miss Aurentsky's hand. Indeed—it seemed as if in that hand he had for the first time since entering the district touched something that resembled his own kind of flesh and blood.

"And what may I ask does a girl like you find to do down here?" he interrogated, thereby rather tactlessly revealing the incongruity to him of the existence of anything really nice in such an environment.

"Why," and Sylvy's emphasis was illuminating, "I live down here. I go to high school and I help mother with the children and father in the store. It was just an—an impulse—to thank you," she added, nervously, as if suddenly fearful of being misunderstood. At the same time she began to turn away.

"I am so glad you yielded to that impuise, Miss

Sylvy—so glad,” Jerry assured her earnestly. “My wounds, which are slight, will heal much quicker, for your sympathy. Good-bye, Miss Aurentsky.”

“Good-bye, Mr. Archer,” she said, her glance fearless again and full once more of warm admiration.

But Jerry, notwithstanding his wounded condition, was finding it very hard to tear himself away.

“I very much hope that I may meet you again,” he declared with fervour, eyes still clinging to the figure of the girl.

“Oh, I hope so,” echoed Sylvy, sincerely enough, though not very confidently.

“Ain’t she a pip?” demanded Kelly, advancing from the background in which he had temporarily obscured himself. “Mother born in Dublin, if you can imagine an Irish Jew—light-haired and blue-eyed. Father’s a Russian, harmless sort, and kind of an easy mark. He’s a flag waver, too. A lot of these guys are what they call internationalists—-anarchists, I call them—but not Aurentsky—he’s some patriot. Look! See Wilson’s picture in his window?”

But Jerry’s interested just now neither in genealogies nor pat. isms.

“Kelly,” he inquired apprehensively as his eye followed the trim figure across the street, “is a girl like that safe in this environment? So pretty and so, so dangerously warm-hearted and—trustful?”

Jerry was expressing both what he had seen and what he had surmised of the girl’s character.

“Safe? There ain’t none o’ them squabs safe—if you ask me,” opined Michael cynically.

“There!” and Jerry’s voice grew suddenly excited. “Who’s that fellow there watching the girl now?” Kelly’s attention had been directed to a young man of dark complexion, evil features, flashy dress, and swaggering walk, whose narrow eyes were never lifted from the figure of Sylvy as she walked rapidly down the street.

“Sh!” warned Kelly. “That’s Joe Maldono. Some bad actor, too, if you ask me!”

"Well, I do ask you," said Jerry. "What does he do?"

"Leader of the 19th division—a Deutsch division—but his real business is pickin' pockets."

Jerry smiled. "And can picking pockets be considered a safe business in Philadelphia?"

"It is if you're leader of your division," averred Kelly.

"If you can deliver a nice majority for the tariff," suggested Jerry, beginning to be cynical about that divine institution.

"Yeh," agreed the wardworker, without the suspicion of a smile. "That guy's been arrested twenty times this year on charges that run all the way from pinchin' pokes to stickin' a man up, but the cases never get no further than the magistrate. They're all dismissed for lack of evidence."

Jerry snorted. "Don't tell me any more," he concluded indignantly, and, turning to give directions to the chauffeur, then made for the open door of the cab. "Kelly, you are so full of information you irritate me."

"You keep on askin' questions," smiled the division leader, and Jerry smiled, too, and thrust his hand through the cab window. "Good-bye, and thanks again for your kindness and for the hospitality of your club."

Despite this final smile for Kelly, however, the cab rolled away with the young man carrying in his heart a fresh sense of depression caused by the memory of that petite flower of a woman stalked by the evil glances of Joseph Maldono. Strongburger, meanwhile, had hurried round to the station to make his report.

"Took you long enough!" rebuked Lieutenant Fish, pacing the floor of the front office.

"My God!" groaned Policeman Strongburger, as indicating the agony through which he had passed.

"Won't he listen to reason?"

"Reason? He won't listen to nothing. He's one of these reformer guys. He's goin' to prefer charges."

"Then you're broke, Strongburger. You resign to-night. But"—and the Lieutenant suddenly halted in his pacings—"how does a reformer guy get to be a friend of Buckingham's?"

This question was sufficiently complex to have detained Strongburger or any other Philadelphian moderately familiar with political relationships in the city, but the unfortunate policeman, being about to become the victim of his own zeal, was gifted just now with mental powers beyond his usual horizon—powers that must have amounted almost to divination, so near to the truth did they bring him as he replied:

"Maybe, maybe he wasn't a reformer till I busted him on the bean."

Lieutenant Fish once more began his restless stride with an impatient negative toss of his head, but in a moment brought up sharply again.

"Maybe not," he admitted with sudden conviction, reflecting dubiously the while on this unsuspected potency in the blows of a night-stick. "Anyway——" and the Lieutenant with a wave of his left hand brushed the wretched policeman from the privacy of his office, while with the right hand he reached for the telephone and secured a connection that gave him the unofficial Mr. Edmunds at Atlantic City, which, by the way, reminds us that the huge seaside play-spot with the tempestuous ocean for a name was a very popular resort with Philadelphia public officials on Sunday, and was becoming, indeed, a sort of week-end City Hall.

Already, however, that slight sense of strain which had existed in the den of Mr. Buckingham at Glen Arden, from the moment when he had commanded Edmunds to locate Jeremiah Thomas Archer, had been relieved by the receipt of a telephone message for Ruth from Mrs. Archer explaining joyfully that she had heard from Jerry.

"Such an interesting experience he's been having down there," chuckled the doting mother. "He

couldn't even come to the telephone, but he promised to be home in an hour and tell us all about it."

"Did he say anything about me?" inquired Ruth.

"Why, no, dearie. You see it was another man that phoned for him."

"Thank you for telling us," said Ruth politely. "I'm so relieved."

But she hung up the phone with a little snap, and there was a smoulder of fire in her eyes. With relief at the ending of her suspense had come revulsion and resentment. She began to feel that she had excited herself unduly, and that she had been treated rather badly by this absent-minded lover whose present duty in life, as she regarded it, was to be where he was wanted when she wanted him. But while meditating what form of punishment should be meted out, an unusually judicial mood overtook the girl and she decided to await that young man's explanation before passing sentence. Such an explanation should come by telephone immediately upon his arrival home. Meantime, here was Jerry's brother Paul cluttering up her father's Sunday afternoon.

"I'll send you home right away, Paul, if you wish," she proposed.

But Paul, whose notion of making himself agreeable to a young lady was to tease, pretended to be arbitrary.

"I think the person who snatched me rudely away from my pleasant family party should take me back, not send me back," he reproached.

"Maybe I'm not going back," bristled Ruth. "There's a limit to the number of times I race across the country in one day for one young man."

"Don't blame you a bit. He doesn't half appreciate you," tormented Paul.

"He does," affirmed Ruth, with a flash from the deep blue eyes. "Shall I send you?"

"You'll take me presently," speculated that young man with irritating coolness. "Besides, I'm really

very content here with Buckingham cigars to smoke, and the Buckingham library to browse in."

The financier looked up with an approving nod from some first editions he was getting a moment to examine. He liked to have his tastes appreciated, whether in tobaccos or literature.

"Edmunds!" announced Higgins, presenting the telephone.

"Hem! Ahem—Mr. Buckingham," began the embarrassed voice of the unofficial official. "I am dismayed to find that young Mr. Archer has been in police custody."

"Police custody?" Mr. Buckingham made the inquiry in tones of perfect self-control, but there was nevertheless a suggestion of something dangerously explosive in their quality.

"Poli-i-ce custody!" exclaimed Ruth, with indignation and amazement, as she rushed to her father's side.

"Why, what can that mean?" demanded Paul, also looking shocked and bewildered as he approached.

"Yes, Mr. Buckingham," the pushbutton was saying. "He was booked this morning at the Third and De Lancy station for assaulting a police officer."

"Indeed?" The frigid incredulity of this interrogatory remark on the part of Mr. Buckingham conveyed to the listening Ruth and Paul that Jerry had been charged with something perfectly preposterous, while it heightened the embarrassment of the voice on the other end of the wire.

"Of course," went on the voice, "there is some horrible mistake. Undoubtedly the officer was to blame. It is all very humiliating to me, Mr. Buckingham, but there is no use beating about the bush. Mr. Archer assaulted the officer and was used rather—rather roughly in turn, no doubt. Anyway, after he came over to the station from the hospital——"

"The hospital!" exploded Mr. Buckingham, who was actually losing some of his venerated calm.

"The hospital; yes, sir."

"Am I to understand then that Mr. Archer was beaten by a policeman so badly that——"

"Beaten? Mercy!" exclaimed Ruth, clutching at her father's arm.

"Beaten!" Paul stood clenching most unchristian fists!

"Why, yes, Mr. Buckingham," responded the voice, "as I said he was handled somewhat roughly, but they probably took him to the hospital only as a matter of precaution. At the hospital he was perhaps somewhat dazed, and when they brought him back to the station to book him, he, for some reason—to avoid publicity, no doubt—made no statement as to what his connections were and unfortunately the police did not recognize him."

"Then I am to understand that Mr. Archer, after being beaten by one of your policemen, is now in jail?"

"Not now, no. Mr. Buckingham, assuredly not. The minute my inquiry, which went out from police headquarters to all stations, reached the Third and De Lancy station Mr. Archer was identified and arrangements made to have him sent to his home. He is on his way there now by automobile."

"Shows that somebody displayed a gleam of intelligence at least," remarked Mr. Buckingham, with sarcasm, while an ominous rumble got into his voice as he added:

"Edmunds, somebody shall answer for this outrage—mark me!"

"You know me well enough to make sure of that, Mr. Buckingham," oozed the voice of the pushbutton. "I have already ordered an investigation."

Again the wire was weighted with the honeyed obsequiousness of the official tones; but Mr. Buckingham, with only an acknowledging grunt, placed the receiver on the hook and turned to face his daughter.

"Mess for your life now, isn't it?" he commented with a slanginess of which none but those who knew Mr. Buckingham very intimately would ever have sus-

pected him; but just now he was very disgusted. "Who would have suspected that young innocent of enterprise enough to get himself into a scrape like this? We shall have a nice spread of it in the papers, no doubt."

"Enterprise?" protested Ruth with instant loyalty. "Jerry has got enterprise enough for anything. But tell me—is he hurt, and where is he?"

"Not much, except his feelings probably; and he is on his way home in an automobile," said Buckingham, who sat chewing in annoyance at his moustache. "What are the Mayor and his subordinates thinking of when they let things get so that a gentleman, walking to church on Sunday morning, may be assaulted and beaten—and by a policeman at that!" With the characteristic bias of humanity for its friends, Mr. Buckingham had overlooked the statement that Jerry had first assaulted the officer.

"Come on, Paul," called Ruth, turning impetuously toward the door. "The first thing, father, is to get to Jerry and see how badly hurt he is and how it all happened."

"Well, naturally!" ejaculated the great man and viewed his daughter's preparations for instant departure with approving eye.

CHAPTER V

IN THE FAMILY BOSOM

"STREETS? I always thought Philadelphia had pretty fair streets," the young man grumbled resentfully, as cobbles, ruts, holes in the pavement, and fissures beside car tracks jolted him this way and that in the cab, every such swing and jar sending a shooting pain through his head that suggested the passage of a rifle bullet. "The streets are rotten," he decided presently, gritting his teeth and bracing himself. "The Organization doesn't give us what we pay for." Until now "the Organization" had been to him a vapour and a bogie, but to-day it had become real—and responsible.

After a time, however, the jolting grew less violent, with at worst only an occasional jar or succession of vigorous undulations. Looking out, Jerry saw that they were on North Broad Street.

"Pavement a good deal better out here," he reflected. Eventually they turned into a boulevard over which the resilient tires spun forward as smoothly as if on glass. Instead of soothing Jerry, however, the change angered him.

"They give the good streets to the rich and the well-to-do, the hypocrites!" he protested. "No wonder they can send an occasional bucket of coal to a widow, or afford some dead heeler a \$25 funeral once in a while."

The cab was on high ground now and Jerry caught glimpses of the wide, wide open, glimpses, too, of some of those long blocks of neat new homes that Philadelphia investors are building to rent or sell to the

more prosperous mechanics and the middle classes generally, and the effect would have been mentally stimulating but for the contrast with a picture of other sorts of homes that was still fresh in his mind. There were also views of hilltops, tree-crowned, and the impressive homes of the prosperous in the regions skirting Fairmount Park began to speed by them—great acre lots with fences of iron or stone, and dignified houses standing far back, looking smug and comfortable behind expanses of tree-covered lawn. The streets in front of these houses were clean. Even the trolley cars, though the very same ones he saw downtown, looked big and strong and appeared to move rapidly.

That, Jerry ruminated, was because life out here was large and vigorous and expansive. The air was bracing, the sky was blue, and the Fifth Ward, with its narrow, dirty, unswept, cobbly streets, with its frugal, hard-working foreigners and its wretched, impecunious native born, together with that inevitable human flotsam which drifts and eddies where the tides of life run slowest—all seemed far away.

“Do people make their own environment? Or does environment make the people?” the young man mused. Suppose he had been born in the Fifth Ward. Would he have been able to emerge? Sylvy Aurentsky, for example. Would she be able to emerge? Or would she succumb to surrounding squalor and to forces represented by that evil face which had followed her down the street?

The chauffeur at this moment swung into the driveway leading to the Archer mansion and Jerry's train of thought was suddenly blown to pieces by the sight of Ruth's little blue car parked at one side. Heavens! He had not calculated on this. What a shock his appearance would be to her; and there was her voice now.

At the sound of his clumping taxicab motor she came flying down the steps, and it was her hand that snatched open the door.

"Jerry! Oh, Jerry! You look perfectly absurd," she exclaimed at sight of his face grinning reassuringly beneath that mountainous peak of bandages. But with a single glimpse of the blood-soaked collar and shirt a faintness came over her, so that Jerry caught and steadied her as he stepped out—to be greeted with expressions of dismay by his mother and solicitous inquiry from all.

The object of pity and concern set their fears at rest most quickly by seizing Ruth's trembling arm and walking briskly up the steps, where he deposited the girl in a large porch chair, and stood smiling at his own gory spectacle, while he stemmed the flood of questions by a swift recounting of what had transpired.

A momentary silence followed the conclusion of his narrative.

"Well, why don't you congratulate me on my valiant act?" he inquired of Ruth.

That young lady still leaned back in her porch chair, looking white and weak.

"I'm just—sick!" she exclaimed. "Why, you might have been killed—or your brain injured, or——"

"My what?" laughed Jerry.

"Right, old top," twitted Paul. "If he'd had any brains he wouldn't have butted in. Leave that scum down there to settle its own troubles, that's what I say."

Jerry turned on his brother.

"Are they their own troubles, Paul?" he asked sharply. "I'm not sure but they're our troubles for which the people down there are being left to suffer vicariously."

"Well, what do you think of that?" ejaculated Paul, looking at his brother in amazement. Then he turned quickly to Miss Buckingham.

"You're right, Ruth; his brain is affected," he declared seriously; but immediately took the sting from his sneer at Jerry's manifestations of social sympathy, by throwing a brotherly arm about his shoulders and

saying affectionately, "Come on inside, you brawler, and let's get this gore off. You'll look quite decently and honourably wounded if we let Ellis run you through the tub and put some clean clothes on you."

"But we must put him to bed. We must have Doctor Palmer come," insisted Mrs. Archer.

"Bed? Nothing! I'm too excited. I've got too much to think about. Besides, Ruth is here. The bath and the change is all right and after that what I want is food! Food, mother, food! I'm absolutely starving."

While these creature matters were being attended to mostly by Paul and the butler, but with Mrs. Archer pottering with her own hands over a cup of broth which Jerry dispatched at a gulp and passed on to graver matters of cold chicken and roast beef, Ruth, Constance, and Mr. Archer were holding an indignation meeting on the veranda.

"Any pain?" inquired his father, when at length Jerry emerged clothed and refreshed and looking astonishingly fit except for his bandages.

"Only here," he said, caressing his sides tenderly. "I think they must have kicked me lovingly in the ribs."

"The brutes!" And Ruth's eyes gave off lightnings.

"To think that such a thing could happen."

"And this little Jew?" inquired Mrs. Archer.

"What were they persecuting him for?"

"Oh, some wearisome factional squabble among the ward heelers in which the most inoffensive man is the legitimate prey of both sides," said Jerry, answering with vague inaccuracy because he held the masculine notion to be popular with some people, that it is no use attempting to explain the technicality of politics to a woman even though it be one's own mother.

"Those foreigners are always making trouble," fumed Mr. Archer.

"All the natural effect of lawlessness," declared Paul smugly. "Think of that whole district being allowed to violate the Sabbath law with impunity provided they

make their peace with the police or the political bosses. By the way, father, speaking of bosses: I had a talk with Jim Rand yesterday. It will cost \$5,000 to get the spur track franchise through. He can have it for us on forty-eight hours' notice."

The Archers, it will be remembered, were engaging in new construction that would virtually double the size of their plant, and this involved the building of an additional spur from one of the stems of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Since this spur must cross a public street a franchise was required from Councils.

"Five thousand? That's two more than we paid before," objected Mr. Archer.

"The cost of living is higher," remarked Paul with a dry smile, "for the Organization as well as for other people."

Jerry pricked up his ears on that word Organization.

"Just what's the idea? Why do we pay Rand anything?" he inquired.

"For paving the way through Councils for our franchise," explained Paul.

"It's like a bribe then, isn't it?" sniffed Jerry suspiciously.

"Bribe? Fiel!" Paul's air of sophistication was superb. "Philadelphia's refined and up-to-the-minute bosses do nothing so vulgar and dangerous. Instead of buying Councils occasionally they control 'em all the time. It's the difference between hiring a taxicab and owning an automobile. Jim Rand owns Councils so far as franchises are concerned. This five thousand will be just a contribution toward the support of the——"

"Of the club that hit me on the head," interposed Jerry.

"Jerry!" protested his mother, "I don't like such cynicism."

"I was really in earnest," insisted Jerry. "Doesn't paying this—this contribution or assessment—make us morally responsible, father—a part of the Organization?"

"Not at all," explained his father, and Jerry had

great respect for his father's opinion. "We are business men. We have nothing to do with politics. It's a pure matter of business with us."

"But the point your reference to the Republican party drags up in my mind is, if our apparent unconcern with the fate of those people down at the bottom was not more than indifference—if it was not deliberately selfish; if we were not bribed and bought off into silence by our own selfish interest? I ask you to consider whether the reason we do not move vigorously to unseat this corrupt political machine which is sweating its millions from the pores of the poor, is that we are very well content with it? It has made its peace with us by giving us good streets, good sewers, police protection, and the protective tariff; for that we are——"

"But the protective tariff benefits all classes," argued Mr. Archer.

"It does if the benefits are not sidetracked on their way to some of those classes. But let me finish: Is it not true that the Organization has made its peace with us by delivering a majority for the tariff candidates and by leaving us comparatively unpreyed upon from its particular form of piracy, so that, actually, we prefer not to have its operation interfered with, only growing a little restless when the cries of the poor devils at the bottom disturb us in our sleep or the sight of their wan, strained faces makes us ill at ease when we spin by in our automobiles?"

"Mother," decided Mr. Archer, by way of barring further discussion of what was to him an uncomfortable subject, "I think Jerry should lie down. It seems to have taken a long time to get Doctor Palmer here."

"No!" insisted Ruth, charmingly imperious. "The air out here is good for Jerry, but you are all perfectly heartless to go talking business and politics and getting him involved in argument. If you men want to talk business and argue politics, why don't you go to the library—or the garage?"

"I take it that last suggestion was sarcasm, Miss Ruth," countered Paul, "and as such father and I are properly withered. As to the argument, you may recall that Jerry started it, and that he himself insists he is perfectly all right, while as for me, I have just seen him devour ravenously a slab of roast beef and half a chicken, and therefore can hardly feel that his condition is dangerous. Indeed, the only thing which makes me suspect that Jerry is not quite unscathed by his bumps is the line of palaver he's been passing out."

Jerry grinned appreciatingly and a retort arose to his lips, but as his one ardent desire was for them all to clear out so he could have Ruth to himself, he was designedly silent.

"In a general way, Ruth is right," agreed Mr. Archer. "We will leave him to her and mother."

Mrs. Archer was a discerning sort of person, and herself presently departed.

"Well, at last!" exclaimed Ruth, with a sigh of relief—"I thought they would never go."

"Their devotion was touching but too enduring," laughed Jerry, "and I suppose now that blithering doctor will arrive at once."

"It would be just like him," said Ruth with a peevish air.

"Hurry now, Jerry, and tell me what you didn't tell them, you know—what it was that made you say the things you've been saying in the last ten minutes."

Jerry tried faithfully to tell her everything he had seen and heard and how it had impressed him. Last of all he told her of Sylvy Aurentsky.

Ruth listened soberly with a growing expression of embarrassed helplessness.

"If one only knew how to do something for that girl," she exclaimed, presently, her face more beautiful, Jerry thought, in its mood of anxious sympathy than he had ever seen it before.

"And yet, how can one?" confessed Jerry, a per-

plexed look in his blue eyes. "The girl's proud—and independent. She would resent charity. In fact, take Sylvy all by herself and study her face, and listen to her talk, and she didn't look one whit more needy than you—in any real sense, that is."

"But it's such a terrible place for her to be," insisted Ruth. "Isn't there a possibility that this misuse of police power that you speak of—that it might be used to her injury? That this pickpocket—Maldono——"

"That's just the horrible fear that's been making me uncomfortable, Ruth," declared Jerry. "Yet the only way to protect her from that possibility seems to be to remodel society down there—or to break the hold of the political machine that makes serfs of those voters. Either, in the present state of the public's mind, seems an impossible task. The very best that could be done for those folks would be just to give them an impartial administration of law and justice."

"Of course, that's the thing to do," declared Ruth, with the cocksureness of vague ignorance.

"The trouble is," admitted Jerry, "that one doesn't know where to begin on a job like that. An individual is so helpless."

Ruth saw that Jerry was strongly impelled to some sort of action and yet that he had no plan at all, no idea even of a plan, and this heightened her own feeling of helplessness, which was doubtless more galling because it seemed that with all her wealth so much power was in her hand.

"Oh, I feel so useless and incapable at times," she exclaimed petulantly. "So disgusted with knitting and bazaars and charities and functions—this endless round of fussing and fuming and expending a hundred dollars' worth of energy to do ten cents' worth of good. Did you read about that bazaar over in New York—\$74,000 taken in at the door and \$750 left for the army and navy?"

"What a farce!" snorted Jerry.

"Well, it seems to me that's rather typical of the

way we women are compelled to work. We have so much time and strength that is simply wasted on efforts that do not count. If we only were somebody—if we could only vote—why, the women of Philadelphia alone could so devote themselves to organization in a single year that they'd have this rotten old machine out of business in one election."

Jerry smiled at the rebellious discontent in Ruth's face and manner as she flung down her knitting, dropped her hand into her chin, and fell to gazing off into distance, the line of her dark brows stern and set while the fingers of one hand tapped irritatingly upon the arm of the chair. The picture she made kindled both his admiration and his sympathy; but as he yielded himself to its spell deeper emotions were stirred and lifted their symbols into the foreground of his mind. He forgot the river wards and all their problems—forgot everything but Ruth and that he wanted her with a most tremendous want. Stealthily he reached out and tentatively he took possession of the hand upon the arm of the chair.

"Ruth!" he murmured softly, "Ruth!"

The girl gently withdrew her hand.

"Aren't you ever going to say you love me?" he pleaded reproachfully.

Without altering the pose of her head, with the chin still buried in the hand, she shifted her eyes till they fell on him, and smiled fondly at the ludicrous picture he made with the turban of bandages heaped high upon his head and the dotting look in his eyes.

"I was very near to saying so this afternoon," she confessed frankly. "When I heard that you were hurt, my heart leaped, and it seemed that I could almost make sure of something."

"I saw it," declared Jerry, with resentful conviction. "I saw it in your eyes when you greeted me, and it began to go out when I danced up the steps like a well man; then my dear family stuck around so long that by the time we were alone it had entirely oozed out. Fine

business, that! Do you know what the logical inference is?"

"There might be several," said Ruth, laughing at his manner of hurt earnestness.

"There can be but one," declared Jerry firmly. "That is that I should go out and get myself properly mangled—come home minus a foot or an arm say, and then you might fall in love with the remains."

Ruth looked mischievous.

"Only, of course, there's one drawback," she teased.

"If it failed——"

"Yes; if it failed," admitted Jerry with mock bitterness, "I should be a mere human remnant all the rest of my days, with nothing to show for it but a block of experience."

"Which, of course, would serve you right. And now, if you're done with this silly mood, we'll try to be sensible for a while. I want you Wednesday for service. You are a committee of one in charge of booth construction for the French Comforts Bazaar. You are to meet the girls at the First Regiment Armory at 3 o'clock. They'll show you what they want and how they want it. Then you'll make plans, get lumber, and put some carpenters and electricians at work, and you'll raise the money to pay for all this from the men in our crowd, because we don't want a dollar of expenses to deduct. The entire proceeds are to go to the boys in the trenches."

Ruth issued her instructions like the charming autocrat she was, with no doubt of instant and exact obedience.

"Uml Sounds like a lot of trouble," teased Jerry.

"But wouldn't you take a lot of trouble for our boys? They're fighting for you," reminded Ruth.

"And if it wasn't for the bad knee I'd be fighting with them," exclaimed Jerry, instantly serious, and a shade of regret passing over his face. "Sometimes I wonder if college athletics, as practised to-day, helps as many men as it hurts."

"And I'd be so proud of you if you were over there," declared Ruth, impulsively, "and yet, I'm selfish enough to be glad you're to just stay here."

"Thanks for that assurance," said Jerry, and took advantage of this fresh note of sympathy in her voice to regain possession of the hand. It was evident, too, she was going to let him hold it momentarily at least when an intruding automobile turned off the boulevard and whizzed up to the steps.

"The doctor!" exclaimed Ruth.

Jerry hastily got his hand back to where the proprieties required it to be.

"You've a hard head," pronounced the surgeon after his examination.

"Otherwise?" inquired the young man grimly.

"Otherwise your condition would be serious. As it is you have only some cracks in your scalp to heal. The interne did a pretty thorough job."

"It felt like it," confessed Jerry, savage at the memory.

"I'll look in to-morrow morning," concluded Doctor Palmer as, having reduced the bulk of Jerry's bandages considerably and allayed all fears, the busy physician hurried away.

"Even if you are to be over them so soon, these wounds of yours must not have been incurred in vain," declared Ruth, when the two were alone again for a minute as she was departing: and then proposed, with a smile: "Let's form a new political organization, you and I, to save Philadelphia."

"I move that the membership rolls be closed," said Jerry, with a happy showing of all his teeth.

"I'm in earnest," reproved Ruth.

"So am I," insisted Jerry.

"And the watchword shall be—for Sylvy Aurensky!"

Jerry looked sympathetic but puzzled.

"And what she typifies," elaborated Ruth. "For the innocent, the helpless, the unprotected, the preyed upon of this great city—for the man who works, for

the woman who works—for the children who ought not to have to work. That's my platform."

"It's a fine platform," said Jerry, his face aglow with admiration as Ruth skipped down the steps.

"You run for Mayor on it; I'll vote for you," the girl laughed as, mounting into her little car, she waved her hand and was off.

CHAPTER VI

AURENTSKY'S TROUBLES BEGIN

AND it was a fine platform!—that one of Ruth's—but nailed together rather late for Sylvy Aurentsky, for while Jeremiah Thomas Archer in his taxicab rolled out of the Fifth Ward, Joe Maldono followed on after the girl and as she was turning to enter the side door leading to the family apartments behind the little store, he spoke to her, lifting his hat. If he had merely said "Good morning," "Good evening," "How do you do," or uttered some other form of personal salutation, Sylvy would have answered with a curt nod and escaped within doors as from some contamination; but the cunning Maldono did not.

He asked a question:

"Have you seen my little sister?" he said. "She ain't been home all day."

That question stopped Sylvy because it was an appeal to her sympathy. Everybody knew Tina Maldono, a little black-eyed, short-haired elf of twelve, with an angel face and very white teeth that were always shining for she was always smiling. Joe's pride in his sister and careful concern for her was the man's one redeeming asset in that part of the community which pretended to make any estimate at all of character values.

"Why, no, I haven't seen her," responded Sylvy. "She must be around in somebody's hallway or in one of the alleys." The girl glanced up and down the street as if expecting Tina to appear momentarily, but at the same time, she was anxious to get away, for Joe's eyes were crawling over her neck and face like spiders.

But Maldono, having stopped the girl by his ruse, planted himself between her and the door, while he asked:

"Would you come to a dance with me to-night, Sylvy, up to Stein's Hall? There'll be good eats and a swell time. Lots of the girls round here is going."

Sylvy knew Stein's Hall well as a place of extreme disrepute. To have been asked to go there was almost an insult. Her face flushed and there was an indignant gleam in her eyes as she shook her head.

"Let me by!" she demanded.

Instead of granting this request, Maldono asked another question: "What you talkin' to that swell guy with the cracked head for?"

Sylvy forgot her fright in indignation. Jeremiah Thomas Archer, in a few short minutes, had become to her both a fact and an ideal, bright, shining, and to be protected from reproach. For this gangster even to mention Jerry's name was defilement.

"What business is it of yours?" she answered hotly.

"It's a lot of my business," drawled Maldono, with a malevolent smile; "a lot of it. I got my eye on you, little girl, and I don't want no swells that flits about in taxicabs putting high-toned notions into your head."

"Well, you needn't have your eye on me," Sylvy retorted boldly. "I wouldn't look at you, Joe Maldono, if I didn't have to."

"Easy! Easy! Little Lamb," taunted Joe, and he was still smiling, though his smile was now mirthless and gloating—and his tone full of impudent suggestion. "You might have to look at me till it made them pretty eyes sore."

Once more a wave of personal fear swept over the girl.

"Let me by!" she demanded, and this time her voice was excited enough to carry round the corner and in at the open door.

Jacob Aurentsky, drowsing behind his counter, heard that cry and recognized both its tones and their

meaning. It was a signal of distress from his daughter, Sylvy, his eldest born, his pride, his pearl, the golden apple of some of his brightest hopes. Jacob not only heard that cry but judged accurately its approximate location. Instead, therefore, of rushing round the counter and out the front, he opened the side door and appeared immediately behind Maldono. The latter had just gripped the wrist of Sylvy and the feel of the soft flesh had maddened the fellow.

"You're going to be mine, seel Minel" he was whispering in her ear, when disconcerted by the sudden appearance of the father.

"Oxcuse mel Right away my daughter's hand to let go," said Aurentsky with some dignity.

Maldono released the hand of Sylvy, flinging it from him nastily.

"Please to my daughter don't speak again," continued Aurentsky, advancing courageously upon the scowling young gangster, and making a breastwork of his tall body behind which Sylvy might slip into the house. But the girl, concerned now for the safety of her father, took a position upon the doorstep and stood her ground.

"He didn't do anything, father. He was just kidding me," she exclaimed, seeking to smooth things over.

"That's right," laughed Maldono unpleasantly. "Only kiddin'."

But this well-meant strategy on the daughter's part led Aurentsky to think she might have been culpable, and he turned upon her with:

"Every decent girl in the block would have more respect for herself than to speak to this man," he reproached. "I want it, Sylvy, that you should never speak to him again."

"Oh, is that so, you dirty Jew!" sneered Maldono, starting up angrily. "Well, I'll get you for that and I'll get you good and plenty. I'll just about have you put out of the way for a while, that's what I will."

With this threat flung out spitefully, Maldono turned and sauntered off, his dark, small eyes smoldering with a cunning light as he meditated revenge. He knew he was blameable; he had been brutal where he meant to be diplomatic, but first the girl's thinly veiled contempt had angered and then proximity to her soft, warm beauty had intoxicated him. Yet the fellow was not on this account greatly dissatisfied with himself, since frightfulness was a part of his settled policy. By means of it he held his sway.

"I been plannin' to shake that Jew down for some time," he muttered. "I guess now's about the time."

Meanwhile, misgivings because he had been forced into open quarrel with a man whose power and malevolence were greatly feared gave Aurentsky a trembly sensation in the knees. This palpitation gradually passed away, however, and the enterprising merchant was quite himself when, some two hours later—say about the time when Jerry and Ruth were forming that small and exclusive new political party—his place was entered by a possible customer of the workingman type, who turned out to be a stranger with a story of misfortune to narrate. It appeared that he was a marble-worker by trade, but had been out of work and had just learned through a letter that his child was very ill in Wilmington. He wished to hurry to the bedside, but was without funds. He offered, therefore, his gold-filled watch for sale for the sum of \$7.50 and a ring with a stone in it for \$5.

The sympathies of Aurentsky were roused by the story and his chaffering spirit excited by the offer of the watch and the ring. Eventually he bought the timepiece for \$4 and the ring for \$2.

In the course of these negotiations, which consumed some time, what seemed like the roots of real acquaintanceship sprang up between the two, an issue natural enough since the stranger was also a Russian and of the seed of Jacob. In consequence of this acquaintanceship the man in distress sought permission to leave

with Aurentsky till he should return or send for it a carpet-sack affair, which he said contained the tools of his craft. Aurentsky consented to this reasonable request and tossed the bag under the counter while the marble-worker went on his way.

Some hours later, however, the marble-worker returned to Aurentsky's place but this time in company with two other men, who presently revealed their identity as detectives. The marble-worker, they explained, was a burglar and under arrest. The watch and the pin were taken possession of as stolen loot, and protest from Aurentsky that he should have his \$6 back. A pretense of search throughout the little shop for other stolen property was made, and eventually the carpet bag was brought to light. On examination its contents proved to be burglar tools, and a choice collection of old silverware, which the detectives identified as having been stolen from a house on Arch Street.

In consequence of these disclosures when the officers of the law departed they not only took the watch and the ring, the silverware and the carpet bag, but they also took Aurentsky, and booked him on a charge of receiving stolen property.

The ensuing night was one long purgatory for the wretched Jew. Detectives, sergeants and lieutenants of police, some patrolmen, a jailer, and a magistrate were devils who alternated in the torture chamber. Among them, too, from time to time, moved a little yellow-eyed shyster lawyer, who appeared to intervene on the side of Aurentsky and to pose as his friend as he was also his co-religionist. When the detectives and the police had exhausted themselves in an effort to wring a confession from Aurentsky, and had only succeeded in frightening him almost into fear of his life, they threw him into a cell, tearing his hair and raving in wild protest of his innocence.

Aurentsky had at no time since his incarceration been permitted to see Becky, his wife, though the faith-

ful woman haunted the front of the police station, weeping, with Sylvy at her side, the girl trying vainly to cheer her mother, while her own heart sank like so much lead. When Aurentsky had been allowed to stew in his own misery for a midnight hour or so—a period judged sufficient to enable him to appreciate the desperateness of his situation—the yellow-eyed lawyer was permitted to enter his cell. Aurentsky clutched at the hand of what appeared to be his one potential and loyal friend as at that of a long-lost brother and listened submissively, while the little man made all things clear.

The lawyer, of course, believed in Aurentsky's complete innocence, but the circumstances, he admitted, were damning. The alleged marble-worker was a notorious burglar. To gain favour with the police he had imputed crime to Aurentsky, even telling them that on other occasions he had disposed of loot through the corner grocer. It was inevitable, therefore, that Aurentsky should go to prison for a long term of years.

"My wife and my poor children!" Aurentsky lamented. "Sylvyl My beautiful, beautiful Sylvyl!" For the father had, from the first, seen in the whole affair a plot of the accursed Maldono—a trick to get him, her father, out of the way, and then—his Sylvyl In this grief the merchant tore his hair again and called on the God of Israel to witness his innocence, employing a voice so loud that it evoked protest and malediction from the tanks.

"Shut up, you dirty Jew!" yelled a guard, and Aurentsky subsided.

Isaacs, the yellow-eye, watched the wretched man's demeanour with calculating eye.

"I couldn't never get you off before a jury in the world," he sighed presently, and then, after a dreary interval of moanings on Aurentsky's part, he added calculatingly, "but if I had a thousand dollars I could square it."

A thousand dollars! The savings of years. Aurentsky shook his head stubbornly.

"Do you remember Joseph Klappheimer?" asked Isaacs craftily. Joseph Klappheimer, neighbour to Aurentsky, arrested upon the same charge—"stolen property"—convicted on the same charge and sentenced to prison—coming back after three years to find his business gone, his family scattered, and himself an outcast! Yes, Jacob remembered Klappheimer very well, and shuddered to see himself in similar position.

A thousand dollars! A cheap price for relief from the agony Aurentsky was suffering. The sum was more than he had, and yet he grasped at the lure of the proposal. A thousand dollars! To be quit of this entangling plot? To escape an uncertain number of years in a penal institution? To get out where he could be free and strong to protect Sylvy? To spirit her away from the eyes and machinations of Maldono? What a bargain!

"Skuvare it? What you mean, skuvare it?" Aurentsky demanded of Isaacs.

"Things is rotten down here," explained the shyster deprecatingly. "If you would give me a thousand dollars, I would give some to Maldono and some to the magistrate, and he would dismiss the case on the ground of insufficient evidence."

"And the police?"

"What can they do if the magistrate dismisses the case?" inquired the shyster shrewdly.

Aurentsky did not know. He was unversed in such matters. He knew that the police pounced like hawks and some they let go and some they devoured. That was all he knew. Therefore, for the little yellow-eyed Isaacs to tell him that money only could save him from the jeopardy in which he stood was all that was necessary to turn Aurentsky's thoughts to that subject and that alone.

But a thousand dollars. He had in an old can in a

secret pocket in the wall of his bedroom, of the existence of which Becky and he alone knew, the sum of \$270. It represented his savings of two years. He confided to the lawyer that he had this sum of money and this sum only.

"But you got the store, ain't you? You could get a thousand dollars for the stock of your store."

Aurensky started at the suggestion with a new despair in his eyes, for the stock of the store was his living, and his family's living—

"Aaronstein would buy the store," intimated the crafty Isaacs, "and give you ready money for it."

"But Aaronstein is a robber," moaned Aurensky.

"He is a lifesaver if he would buy it," reflected Isaacs.

Aurensky plucked at his beard, and wished to see his wife, to see his cousin Abie out in Kensington, to see his Rabbi— Oh! he had many wishes—but none of them it appeared could be granted. Only little yellow-eyed, pussy-footing Isaacs had entrée to jail and cell, and at length he, too, went away. All night Aurensky debated, sleepless. At eight in the morning they admitted his wife to see him. Isaacs had conveniently found time to make her aware of the grave state in which her husband stood, and he had told her that money alone would avail.

Money—ah, always money! Money saves the rich. Money, too, can save the poor—if they can get it. This was logical reasoning to Becky's mind and made a hot-house soil for Isaac's sowings.

"Sell the store, papal! Sell the store, and save yourself," she pleaded unhesitatingly.

"How should we live without it, the store?" countered Jacob stubbornly.

"But the children—the children—little Isadore—all the time they cry for you. Sylvy—her eyes are wet all night with tears. She would give up herself even that you should be by us at home."

Give herself! Ah, yes. This was what Aurensky had feared.

"Sell it!" he declared with a shudder. "Sell it. I take my pushcart and go on the street to peddle again. It takes me seven years to get my store once more, but I do it. I do it!" And hope which springs so eternally in the human breast for a moment flickered up in the bosom of Aurentsky.

"But not to Aaronstein, the robber! To him last of all!" he shouted as his wife went out to tell of the success of her mission to the waiting Isaacs. Within five minutes the latter was on his way.

Within an hour Aaronstein was inventorying the little stock of goods. His appraisal was a very pessimistic one—prices cut to the bone, and the totals kept for his eye alone. They showed, when he had made every possible deduction and paring, an unshrinkable value of \$728.

"I geeve you \$300, Isaacs," he said shortly.

"You would, huh, you robber! I could have you arrested for that—almost—for such fraud—such cheating of a poor and helpless man. Aurentsky was a good feller, you understand—what for do you take the shirt off his back?"

"I should take the shirt off his back!" rejoined Aaronstein with a sneer. "I should, hey! Somebody is taking the skin off his back, and the blood out of his veins what! Who is dot, if I am taking the shirt?"

So the two men chattered and wrangled.

"Four hundred and fifty dollars is all he will give, the robber!" communicated Isaacs at length to Becky waiting in an agony of suspense in the little living room at the back.

\$450 and \$270 made \$720.

"It can't be done for less than a thousand," declared Isaacs hopelessly.

Becky began to cry. She had shed many tears in the last eighteen hours. Isaacs displayed no enthusiasm for the tears, but exhibited signs of interest when the woman dragged out her few paltry heirlooms and keepsakes; the small nestegg for Sylvy's dowry, whenever

Sylvy should need a dowry; Sylvy's own savings and the contents of the children's banks.

Convinced now that the family of Aurentsky had been milked dry, the lawyer waited while Becky went weeping to the pawnshop and came back with money for the jewellery.

Then Isaacs took the \$720 and the \$52 which had resulted from this final looting process and went off to see Maldono and the magistrate.

The conspirators sat together and divided the money in three piles. Maldono took one pile and dropped it deliberately into his pocket with a wink and a smirk of satisfaction; the magistrate got his pile out of sight hurriedly with one furtive clutch of the hand; Isaacs, however, paused and creasing each bill lovingly through his fingers, counted his share again to make sure no mistake had been made.

"Turn him loose," said Maldono, "and we'll see if he's learned anything."

The magistrate made a note on his record of the case: "Dismissed; evidence insufficient."

Maldono met the marble-worker later and gave him a \$10 bill. Isaacs, meanwhile, slipped in through the police station to Aurentsky in his cell.

"All the robber would give me is \$450," he reported gloomily.

Aurentsky ground his teeth.

"But for \$772—on account of you being a friend of mine—they squared it."

"I can go?" demanded the prisoner, leaping up excitedly.

"You are free."

Aurentsky flung his arms about Isaacs and kissed him. Then together they walked out into liberty. The sunshine felt good to Aurentsky, so good, and there were Becky and Sylvy hurrying out from the back of the store to meet him. It seemed years since they had been together in their little family circle last night. He embraced each passionately and kept reaching out

hand after hand to the other children as they came running up. Last of all came little Isadore; him Aurentsky snatched into his arms and bore tenderly, held close against his lean, palpitating breast.

Before the store itself, however, Aurentsky's sense of relief and joy departed. The little store was gone. Aaronstein stood behind the counter. Aaronstein, the robber!

Aurentsky's eyes lighted with malevolence at the sight of the rotund figure waddling about within, but he did not enter. Neither did he cry out nor hurl a curse. He feared to. He felt strangely subdued and overcome. In a night he had been bereft, and he walked in liberty now, but by the sacrifice of his savings and of the savings and keepsakes of his wife and children, and by the faithful intercession of a friend, Isaacs, to whom he must be forever grateful, though hitherto he had barely liked Isaacs.

That afternoon the Aurentskys moved, for a new family would be living behind the store to-morrow. So quickly are adjustments made among the poor, and the Aurentskys in a night and half of the day had become poor.

CHAPTER VII

JERRY MAKES DISCOVERIES

THE day the Aurentskys moved was the day upon which Jerry, sixty hours on the way toward recovery from his wounds, and with his bandages reduced to inconspicuous plaster covered by his hat, went down to answer the charge of strafing a policeman. He had some difficulty in preventing his brother Paul from accompanying him as a bodyguard.

"At least you'll take a lawyer with you," persisted Paul.

"Nope. Going down there alone. Just want to see what'll happen."

"Jerry, you are not merely obstinate, you are fool-hardy," warned the elder brother, in something of a huff.

"So long, old man," chuckled Jerry, imperturbably amiable of mood this morning. "See you at the works in a couple of hours."

Magistrate Parry recognized Jerry instantly and greeted him familiarly, and as an ally, rather than a culprit.

"No charge agen you, Mr. Archer," he answered with a mysterious smile to Jerry's inquiry.

"But why isn't there?" demanded that young man, a trifle piqued, as if someone had been interfering in his personal affairs.

"Because there ain't no Policeman Strongburger for one thing," answered the magistrate bluntly.

"Then they did break him?" Jerry asked a question, but his voice fell, for he was a trifle dismayed to find the unseen power acting so expeditiously and so

unerringly to accomplish the results which it desired. "But," and he recovered himself somewhat. "But you can't remove a policeman like that without a hearing, can you?"

"And you can't help it if he resigns, can you?" retorted the magistrate.

Resigned! So that was the length to which they had gone to avoid a scandal.

"But he oughtn't to be permitted to resign," blustered Jerry. "I want to file charges against that man to show him up, and to show the system up. And I want to know about the little fruit merchant that he arrested and clubbed without excuse. Some funny name—Rosenswiper?"

"Rosensweig—the man that was arrested with you. Case dismissed!" It was plain that Magistrate Parry saw no use in wasting words over anything so satisfactorily terminated.

"Dismissed? Why, the man was guilty on three counts. He exposed his fruit uncovered for sale; he exposed it on the sidewalk beyond the legal limit, and he kept his store open on Sunday."

"There's a lot of them kind of misdemeanants," chuckled the magistrate. "Rosensweig won't have no more trouble, now that the Deutsch policeman knows what kind of connections he had."

"You mean that because Rosensweig is supposed to be a friend of mine, and because somebody pretty well known in the city chanced to inquire for me, that this Jew may in the future violate the law with impunity?"

"Some laws," grinned the magistrate—"If his pull is genuine."

"Well, it isn't genuine," declared Jerry with emphasis. "Rosensweig is nothing to me one way or the other: it's simply that I don't propose to stand idly by and see one helpless citizen singled out and discriminated against. However, what concerns me most is the general condition that appears to obtain down here. Having studied the Constitution of the United

States in school, and having heard it referred to occasionally since in editorials and orations, I have rather assumed that it was still in operation." Jerry's tone was mildly sarcastic. "It seems, however, that government as she is taught and as she is practised are two different affairs, and I keep running across things down here that make me want to ask questions."

Magistrate Parry smiled the smile of superior knowledge, but at the same time nodded the nod of entire willingness to impart this knowledge to a gentleman at once so amiable and so highly connected with the ultimate sources of political power in the city.

"Do I understand," asked Jerry, taking advantage of this obvious graciousness of mood, "that you, a magistrate, dare dismiss a complaint without a hearing—two of them—in fact—regardless of laws violated, simply on an intimation that somebody of consequence in the city would be pleased if the matter was given no further publicity?"

"Well, not exactly that, Mr. Archer. I had orders to do what I done."

"And 'orders' are above the law?"

"Are you kiddin'?" inquired Magistrate Parry, beginning to suspect that he was being made the butt of humour.

"No, magistrate," reassured Jerry. "I was never more in earnest." And then, presuming upon the friendliness of the man, which was as plain as his utter lack of any sort of judicial pose, the kindergarten student of ward politics decided to consider his first question sufficiently answered and to press another and more interesting one.

"By the way, may I ask, Judge Parry, what has been your training for your magisterial position?"

"Jimmy Carey got me the job."

"Job?"

"It pays \$3,000 a year."

"But what had you done to prepare yourself to sit as a magistrate? Were you a lawyer?"

"Lawyer, no!" and Parry laughed. "I was a dock foreman; and my first year in politics I delivered eighty-two votes off my own dock. The next election I carried my own division by one hundred and sixty-nine majority, there only bein' two hundred and twenty odd votes in it. After that I got to be sort of a lieutenant of Carey's, you might say. He put me on the force for a couple of years, then promoted me to sergeant for three months, to sort of learn me the ropes, and after that he put me here. I've been here ever since."

"But not—not having any legal training, I should think you'd often be embarrassed about what—what course to pursue."

"Well, Jim knows what he wants done, and sometimes I know before he tells me."

"I see. And you view your 'job,' as you call it, as one in which your duty is to render political service to the man who put you there."

"Sure! What else did he put me here for? I'd be loyal, wouldn't I?"

Jerry, looking at the square-rigged countenance of Magistrate Parry, with its wealth of jaw and paucity of brow, with its stamp of low cunning and ignorant sincerity, decided that the man would be loyal.

"I guess I'll be going," he said, putting out a hand; "thank you very much."

"Welcome," assured the magistrate with a hearty clasp, and then admonished persuasively, "I wouldn't be too hard on Strongburger. He's a good enough Dutchman and wouldn't a-been against us only he got orders. He's lost his job for his mistake and, besides, you couldn't blame him much."

"For hitting me? Certainly not. But for hitting that inoffensive little Ros—Rosenscweig; for that I blame him. A cowardly blow is a cowardly blow. Strongburger should have disobeyed his orders. And I'll tell you one thing else: I don't intend to rest till I get at the source that issued those orders, and then I'll make somebody sweat."

The magistrate viewed for a moment the aroused gleam of Jerry's eye and the determined set of his jaw with both admiration and speculation in his glance.

"You'd a make a good man in the ward," he complimented. "Kind of got your dander up, haven't you?"

"Kind of," admitted Jerry.

"I got a brother workin' for you, Mr. Archer," it occurred to the magistrate to say at the last, instructed by all his political instinct that for Mr. Archer to know this might some day make it better for that brother; or, if it turned out that the brother stood high in the Archer graces, might some day make it the better for the magistrate.

"Indeed. What's his name?"

"William—William Parry."

"Why, yes, I know him, a sub-foreman in our tempering department; steady, sensible sort of man."

"Yes, sir. William's a good fellow, but unfortunate that way."

"Unfortunate? What way?"

"Why," smiled the magistrate. "He's always had to work. William don't never have quite pull enough to land him a job."

Jerry also smiled.

"And the inference is that when a man lands a city position he does not have to work."

"Well," qualified the magistrate, only slightly embarrassed, "it's a different kind of work and a different way of workin'."

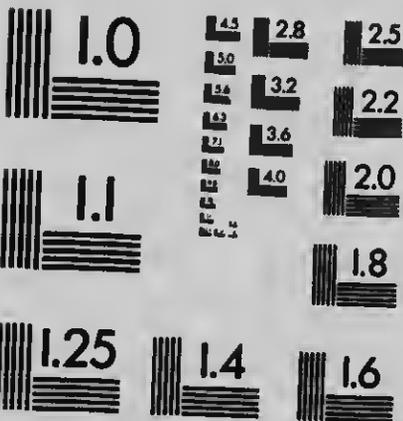
"I concede that," said Jerry. "Good morning, Mr. Parry."

The young manufacturer stepped into the open air with a certain sense of not knowing whether to go forward or back. There was no case against him: there was no Policeman Strongburger for him to proceed against. Yet instead of simplifying his course these two disconcerting facts made it more complex: and they, together with light gleaned from his talk with the



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magistrate, sharpened his growing conviction that something was radically wrong with government in Philadelphia.

"The idea of a man of that type in a magistrate's chair!" he reflected.

There followed also inevitable reflections in regard to Mr. Buckingham. Had he really intervened? And had he the political right to intervene? Or was it merely that the Organization feared to offend him because he was a man of power? Did Mr. Buckingham control the machine, therefore, or did he merely browbeat it, as he had been known to browbeat men and institutions of other sorts?

Still debating questions like this, a certain ill-defined curiosity led Jerry's footsteps toward the store of Moritz Rosencweig. It was open for business, and to Jerry's surprise the fruit was on the sidewalk almost to the gutter. Moreover, the mosquito netting had entirely disappeared. Flies crawled over the fruit, except as disturbed by a most occasional whisk of a feather duster in the hands of Moritz—dust blew into it and a policeman, club in hand, swung by, and beyond helping himself to one of Rosencweig's pears, paid never a bit of attention to these reckless violations of the law.

There was a strip of white bandage around the head of Moritz, and he bestowed at first only a casual, appraising glance on Jerry, whose dressing more skilful surgery had reduced to plasters, which a large fedora tolerably well concealed; but the glance of the little merchant was prolonged as if it had discerned something familiar in the features. Recognition came suddenly and with a great outburst of volubility.

"Ah, Mister—My friend! My friend!" he exclaimed, seizing Jerry's hand and squeezing it between both of his own clammy members. "Rachel! Rachel! Hurry up! Here is the gentleman what soaked Strongburger for me. You bring me good luck, my friend; you bring me good luck. Day before yesterday comes Strongburger that he should apologize. They vant I

should put my boxes on the sidewalk now and my store should be open also on Sunday. Kelly said I can wiggle my fingers at the policeman now, because . . . you are Mr. Archer—not?"

The little Jew's beady eyes were shining with eager admiration.

"Yes, I am Mr. Archer," admitted Jerry, smiling and embarrassed by the effusiveness of his welcome.

All the while, too, Rosenscweig was dragging his distinguished visitor inside the store and toward the door at the back. It was through this that Rachel at length appeared and, recognizing Jerry also, collaborated with her husband in herding him into a little parlour where the embarrassed young man was made to sit down in a huge plush chair, slightly rickety, but making up in the brilliance of its colouring what it lacked in solidity of construction.

Soon two little Rosenscweigs, countenances somewhat soiled, were crawling over him and investigating his pockets as if, in his rôle of family benefactor, which their small keen brains were quickly made to comprehend, he might be a sort of perambulating Santa Claus whose garments would yield sweets or toys. Disappointed in their quest and sensing, as childhood always does sense, that their attentions embarrassed, they became shy and retired to their mother's chair, from the back of which they hung while she volleyed her gratitude, her joys, her relief, and her protestations of undying friendship. All this time Jerry could feel the occasional presence of Moritz somewhere behind him and knew that he stood at the door looking in and listening or interjecting additional sentiments of his own, except as possible customers or a passing street arab drew his attention to the front.

"But—but you know," insisted Jerry dutifully, "that the city ordinances should be obeyed. Everybody should be made to cover up their fruit. It isn't sanitary—not healthy, you know. And the sidewalks should be clear. Think how much cleaner and nicer

your streets would look, how much easier to get by on them, if only the business was done in the stores where it belongs. And, of course, no one should sell goods on Sunday: Sunday is the—the Christian Sabbath.”

“Nobody would got to obey the law if dey stand in mit de boss,” pined Moritz. “I got a good enough stand-in mit Carey already, only dies here Mayor Smith, he turned in for Deutsch, and den de police come down on me to turn in, too. But I should turn my back on Jimmie Carey, him what got me out of jail once when in Abie Cohen’s they pull us for gambling. For me, you could be sure I wasn’t playin’ a thing else but checks only once I put a dime on the red and then two dimes on the black—just to see if a system I thought out would work. And it would work, and just when Abie was goin’ to pay me thirty-six times two dimes, which is \$7.20, the cops—dey pulled the place. For evidence dey took the \$7.20, but dey never mentioned it at tall and belief me, dey never gave it back to——”

A bell rang mysteriously from behind a door somewhere close to Jerry’s left shoulder. Rachel arose and went to answer it; but Jerry had to rise to let the door swing, and in doing so noticed that it opened into a room apparently next door to the fruit store. This room was fitted up as a restaurant, and about one of the tables a party of men of the stevedore or navvie type was grouped. Beside the table stood a heavy-shouldered, double-chinned woman who, as Rachel’s face appeared in the doorway, nodded furtively and held up four fingers. Rachel, as quickly, closed the door and disappeared in a direction that was probably kitchenward.

Something about that furtive nod and the air of discreet importance which Rachel’s manner took on aroused Jerry’s curiosity, but he managed to conceal that mental state until the woman reappeared bearing a tray on which were set four tall glasses containing an amber fluid with a frothy, foamy collar. Jerry gazed in amazement.

"My sister keep the restaurant," explained Moritz, with a nod toward the closed door. "But we keep the beer."

"The beer?" Jerry ejaculated the word as if it were strange to his lips and had been started violently out of him.

"And does your sister have a license to sell liquors?" he inquired stiffly.

"A license? No," said Rosencsweig with a foxy smile. "She chust sell to her friends."

"But don't the police——"

"Sure-r-r-r-e the policiel but every week my sister give to them \$6."

"But that is illegal. That is bribery." Jerry's manner expressed a violent sense of outrage, as he seized the opportunity to supply something which was lacking in the education of this little Jew.

"Oh, I should not do so no more," assured Rosencsweig. "Next Sunday night when comes the collection man, my sister would say to him, I got to pay you no more money. Mister Archer is friend of mine. You schtart something if you vant to; chust try it voncel"

Jerry stood up in the intensity of his horror at this revelation of new depths of moral blindness.

"You must understand, once and for all, Mr. Rosencsweig," he warned, "that I have no influence with this apparently corrupt administration. Least of all must you imagine my name can be any sort of protection to you while selling intoxicating liquors illegally—or legally, for that matter. Mr. Rosencsweig, alcohol is a poison. It destroys men's health, it destroys their souls, it is a breeder of violence. You who are physically weak—you of all men should not sell it."

"I do not drink myself, except a little schnapps at my meals," apologized Rosencsweig; but Jerry remained obdurate and an expression of abject fear came on to the little man's face as he saw that this heaven-sent and powerful friend was angered and

realized that his new and precious "pull" was endangered.

"Ah, Mister—Mister Archer," the Jew wheedled. "You would not stop a poor man what he makes an honest living, would you?"

"Honest? No; but, Rosenscweig, your lack of moral sense is deplorable. You are violating the law. You are corrupting officials. You are making yourself part and parcel of the system which yesterday was oppressing you and clubbing you over the head."

"But they could not club me any more, Mist' Archer, now that you are my friend," and again Moritz tried the effect of a full-toothed and pleading smile.

Jerry stood for a moment with his hands on his hips and gazed at the man.

"Say, Rosenscweig," he demanded, "are you utterly hopeless?"

Moritz stared blankly, bewildered and increasingly alarmed.

"I dun't know," he stammered in that throatish discord which passed for a voice.

"Well, neither do I," announced the young man emphatically, and he turned on his heels and marched out of the place.

Chiding himself for a fool, Jerry walked swiftly up the block to where his chauffeur had been told to wait. He was leaving the district in the same sort of mood of perplexity and disgust which had possessed him when he departed from the Lafayette Club three days before. Yonder was the club building now.

Jerry stopped and looked at it curiously. Then his eye roved across the street to the corner where Sylvy had pointed out her father's grocery store, and he stood a moment contemplating the spot, as hoping that the girl herself might appear. A sight of her would once more have sharpened the dulled edge of his interest in the citizenship of the river wards. But Sylvy did not appear.

Remembering, however, that it had been his intention to find out something more about the girl, Jerry abandoned his purpose to enter the automobile and strolled on past it and across the street. There seemed a general absence of those figures whose presence would have made the scene familiar. There was no Sylvy, no Kelly, not even a Maldono in sight. Hesitating a moment, Jerry mounted the two steps which led into the neat-looking little store.

A heavy person with complacent beard and a suspicious eye stood behind the counter, weighing out some dried fish for a shawled woman who watched the scales warily. Coarse, sensual selfishness was stamped all over the grocery man's features. Jerry disliked him instinctively and felt a fresh wave of sympathy for Sylvy. The customer paid for her fish and departed.

"Mr. Aurentsky?" Jerry inquired, politely, but without being able to command any special cordiality.

"Naw! Not Aurentsky!" snapped the gross one irritably. "Aurentsky ain't here no more. I own it the store now—Solomon Aaronstein."

"Ah, I see, Mr. Aaronstein," observed Jerry, greatly relieved and laughing coolly at such churlishness. "And has his family moved?"

"Vell, you don't see none of dem loafers hanging round here, do you?"

Jerry stopped laughing. His expression changed so swiftly that Mr. Aaronstein was disconcerted and adopted a more respectful air.

"Could you tell me where they have moved to?"

"I could not, Mister. Dey just vent." And Mr. Aaronstein made a gesture of dispersion with both his hands as if he described the sudden scattering of a flock of sparrows.

"Um! Thank you," said Jerry and took his way again into the street, but with a clouded brow. There he ran almost directly into Kelly.

"Why, Mr. Archer!" and Michael Kelly with that horrible muscular contortion of his which denoted a

smile thrust forward the hand whose mould in early manhood had been formed upon a pick-handle, extending thereby a cordial welcome to his division. "Feelin' better, I hope?"

"First class. Glad to see you. Was just looking for Sylvy. There's a grouch named Aaronstein in there who says Aurentsky's sold out and moved."

"That blamed Maldono!" ejaculated Kelly with some feeling.

"Actually moved to get away from that fellow, eh? Well, I'm glad of it."

"Nol Nol" explained Kelly with a frown. "That fellow Maldono put one over on Aurentsky. Shook him down for all he was worth."

"Robbed him, you mean?" Jerry's voice was eager, his features expressing shock and alarm.

"Framed him," declared Kelly. "Planted some stolen property on him, had him arrested for a fence, made it look like a long jolt up the road, and then trimmed him for all he had in order to get out."

"My God!" exclaimed Jeremiah Thomas Archer. "You mean that the police officials actually connived at a thing like that—why, that is virtually highway robbery."

"Oh, you couldn't exactly say they connived. It wasn't necessary. They was used," explained Kelly, with fine distinction in his terms. "Somebody else done the connivin'—Maldono and a little shyster lawyer named Isaacs that hunts with him. A Jew, too."

"This is monstrous!" declared Jerry. "Get me the facts, Kelly, and I'll rip that thing wide open."

"Facts? There ain't no facts about a thing like that. There ain't no witnesses. It's only Aurentsky's word against Isaacs and Maldono, and Aurentsky's word don't count."

"But I tell you," insisted Jerry hotly, "this is an outrage I'll never stand for. Why, I'll rip——"

"Excuse me, Mr. Archer," interrupted Kelly, not impolitely, but with great sincerity. "Excuse me,

but you couldn't rip nothin'. You wouldn't get anywhere at all. You wouldn't find a trace of the record—only that Aurentsky had been arrested and released because the evidence was insufficient to hold, and there ain't no crime in that."

"But Aurentsky knows he lost his store," persisted Jerry.

"Yeh—but his word wouldn't prove what he done with the money. Besides, Aurentsky might throw you down, at that. These Russian Jews are queer. They've got the Oriental point of view, they're Asiatics virtually, and I ain't ever able to make 'em out for sure."

Recalling Rosencweig, Jerry's impetuous mood was tempered somewhat by this warning.

"But Aurentsky has been robbed by Maldono of his only property, his store, and that by a skillful use of the machinery of law!" he argued.

"You go it right," assented Kelly, "but there ain't no use of getting worked up over it. All you can do, Mr. Archer, is wait till the primaries and watch us beat this fellow Deutsch, who's just a natural high-binder, or he wouldn't stand for Maldono. Us Careyites are going to see that Deutsch is busted good and plenty."

"But the Organization stands for Deutsch!"

"And if Carey wins the ward it'll have to do business with Carey, won't it?" Kelly was amiably impudent.

"What I am going to do," declared Jerry, his rage cooled, but his determination hardened, "is to fight the Organization—the whole rotten system." Kelly smiled witheringly.

"Fight the Organization? Say, Mr. Archer, I've heard that a lot of times, but it ain't done, let me tell you. They either lick you or take you in."

"Take me in?"

"Yeh—if you make a fight in your division or ward they try to run the roller over you. If you lose, that's

about all for you. If you win—'what's he want?' they say; and they just open the ranks and take you in. You land accordin' to your stren'th. If you're strong enough you might even get to be the big boss yourself. Then you don't fight the Organization, you run it."

"That is your observation, is it—that every man who fights the Organization wants something?" inquired Jerry.

"Yeh. And they all quit when they get it."

For a moment the young man stood depressed by such cynicism, and then something strong welled up inside of him and he felt all his moral sinews stiffen like setting concrete.

"Well, Kelly," he answered, "so far as your observation applies to me, I'm willing to admit that it's correct. I do want something. I want honest government in Philadelphia, and I'm going to fight until I get it. I'm going to fight until that police station over there is a place that every law-abiding man and woman in this ward looks upon as a source of justice and protection."

"It'll be a long fight," said Kelly, letting his eye wander meditatively over the dingy exterior of the red brick building which Jerry's nod had indicated.

"I'm young yet," boasted Archer.

Knowing the fatuousness of such a dream, Kelly nevertheless let his admiration for a fighter and a fight woo him into contemplating the possibility.

"I'll be through stickin' round long before it's over," he decided, "but I wish ye luck. And if I do happen to be lingerin' souperfluous on the stage, I hope there'll be a bit of a job for deservin' old Mike." Kelly seemed to see himself thirty years hence, withered and needy, leaning for support on a street-sweeper's broom.

"There'll be no jobs for the deserving, but only for the efficient," affirmed Jerry stoutly. "The city will hire its help the way business men do, because they are the best that can be got for the money and the position."

"You highbrow reformers just overlook one thing when you dream a nightmare like that," observed the ironic Kelly.

"And what's that?" demanded Jerry aggressively.

"That voters is human bein's," chuckled the division leader. "Still, you can fool 'em once in a while. And if anybody could, it'd be a young agreeable man like you, that's got so much money he can afford to be honest and the nerve to insist on everybody else bein' the same without having the same good reason," Kelly grinned horribly.

"Despite your pessimism, Kelly," Jerry insisted. "I'm going to start the fight. I don't know just how, but I'm going to start the fight. One of the first moves will be to put Joe Maldono in jail and to keep him there."

"Keep him there? Excuse me if I laugh."

Jerry ignored the interruption. "The first step toward that is to find the Aurentskys. Could you undertake to locate them for me?"

"Yes, I'll do that much, Mr. Archer, but, you understand, I don't mix up in this fight you're starting, because when you fight the Organization you fight me."

"Understood perfectly," smiled Jerry. "Call me up at the Works this afternoon."

"Some afternoon," modified Kelly. "Them Aurentskys might have took quite a run before they holed up."

"If they're discreet they would," argued Jerry. "But I shall be very anxious until I hear about them. Besides, I have to have Aurentsky before I can prosecute Maldono."

"Do my best," said Kelly.

"Thank you," responded Jerry, and signalled to his chauffeur, who had followed at a distance.

CHAPTER VIII

A MAN OF THE FIGHTING PLEBES

"THE West End Trust Building," Jerry announced, stepping into the car. So eager was he to originate the case of *The People vs. Jos. Maldono* in the matter of conspiracy and extortion practised upon one Jacob Aurentsky, that he had decided to see his personal attorney and friend, Victor Rollinson, before going to the Works for the day.

"Well, I'm damned!" said the lawyer when he had heard the story.

"I want you to go to the District Attorney, Victor, get yourself appointed a special prosecutor, and go after that fellow," declared Jerry. "He would hardly refuse to cooperate."

"No, I think not," said Victor, as he lighted his pipe, "but criminal cases are rather out of my line these days."

"Fighting for right and justice is not out of your line," argued his young friend eagerly.

"No, not if there was any prospect of winning," admitted Rollinson with a dubious shake of the head, "but do you know what would happen to me if we pressed this fight?"

"Tell me what you think would happen," proposed Jerry.

"Why, somewhere up the line we should find the sluices of justice blocked and dammed."

"But, Victor, that's why I came to you," argued Jerry earnestly. "You are strong enough to plant TNT under the dam and smash the combinations. You are irresistible. When you lower your head and

charge, things have to get out of the way. When you lift up your voice and roar, no jury dare acquit that fellow."

"But have you thought what would happen to me if I throw discretion to the winds and jam this prosecution through by sheer personal force?"

"No; and you're not going to think of it, either," said Jerry quickly.

"But I am going to think of it, because it means that I'd lose half my business."

"Why, how?" demanded Jerry in amazement.

"It would just drop away," explained Victor coolly.

"Clients of mine, corporations, trust companies, banks—business houses that are under obligation one way or another to the machine, all would be appealed to, and they'd take care to cover. Not that they'd vulgarly discharge me as their attorney, you understand, but they would hold up pending litigation, they would start new cases through other attorneys—and the first thing you know, I'd be out chasing the ambulances to get work enough to keep the clerks busy."

"Is it as bad as that—the ramifications of the Organization influence, I mean, and as powerful and relentless?" inquired the young man whose eager optimism never permitted him to estimate fully the difficulty which confronted him.

"It's worse, worse than you can understand. Talk about an interlocking directorate! Why, the Organization is an interlocking directorate of unscrupulous greed that extends from Maldono picking pockets in his division to the contractors looting the Treasury at City Hall, and, sometimes I think, to the traction interests forcing extra pennies from passengers. And to protect all these, the interlocking directorate goes on from the City Hall to the State House and from the State House to the—shall I say it? No; by heaven, my love of my country's ideals will not let me say it; but sometimes I fear it for all that."

And the lawyer shifted his eyes away into distance and was silently thoughtful, his breathing quickened by the depth of feeling his own words had stirred.

Rollinson was large, his skin was fair, his eyes were blue, his hair was blond, thick, and worn rather long; his lips were pliant; they could look full and red and voluptuous as a woman's; they could be thin and cruel as he pressed a cross-examination home; they could scorn or sear with every bite of the lash of his invective. The man was a different type from Jerry. He had no breeding to speak of, as breeding is spoken of in Philadelphia. He had come up out of the soil of Germantown with no sponsoring genealogy—a paper carrier, a butcher's boy, a student at night school, and finally, by prodigious labour, he had gathered in at Temple College a law course and some ideals. Finding the law course more serviceable than the ideals, he had nevertheless not abandoned the latter as, by the employment of the former and an aggressive spirit which must have been born in some Viking ancestry, he had battled his way in a short ten years of practice to the commanding place as a trial lawyer which he now occupied at the Philadelphia bar.

Nor was it strange that Jerry should have coveted this great Ursus of a man for his cause. Besides the bond of friendship existing between them, the young manufacturer, whose particular genius was organization, had seen the need for enlisting a brain, a heart, a personality like Victor Rollinson's.

And Victor, loving right and hating wrong, with the smell of the bottom strata of society from which he had come still fresh in his nostrils, found his sympathies and enthusiasm readily enlisted, but a man who, once in the fray, fights relentlessly with every resource at his command often enough is the one who pauses coolly to count the cost before answering the first call to arms; and this was what Rollinson was doing now.

"Besides," the lawyer mused aloud, as if the chain of his silent thoughts had of themselves broken into

speech, "mysterious things would happen in what practice remained to me if I put Joseph Maldono behind the bars. I'd lose suits that would otherwise be won; juries would hang; cases would get stuck on appeal; continuances would be refused; non-suits would be granted."

"Do you mean that other than the magistrates' courts are venal?" asked Jerry.

Victor side-stepped the question.

"Oh, I believe our Judges try to be independent," he replied. "And most of them are, but the whole atmosphere around them is so tainted that subtly and unconsciously a Judge's opinion or his action sometimes may be swayed in such a way that the issue of a case turns upon it. Then, you want to remember, that there are other officials than Judges around a court, and that these can sometimes pull out a lynch-pin or throw a monkey-wrench into the engine, and you don't know that it's been done till too late. My heaven, Jerry, you don't understand what it means to have a whole city and county government put together like ours, on totally wrong principles."

"Somebody's got to stop it, or lose themselves trying," declared Jerry gravely.

"That's so," agreed Victor. "Some fool of a patriot."

"You're a kind of a fool of a patriot, aren't you?" insinuated Jerry with a glance that plumbed deeply.

Victor looked a mild reproach, as if he thought his friend were pressing him too near. In truth, the two stalwart men, with neither of them confessing very much of what was going on in their hearts, were getting very close to each other, and into Rollinson's meditative silence Jerry poured a further stream of his recent experiences, going into details about Sylvy, the petite, trustful, and beautiful, and the thing he feared for her. He added also the story of Rosensweig, an embryo citizen, who, under the very shadow of Independence Hall, was already morally stunted and hopeless.

"We kind of owe it to old William Penn, Benjamin

Franklin, Robert Morris, and Jefferson and Washington, and all those great patriots who gave themselves to building the past of Philadelphia, of which the city is so proud—we rather owe it to them to clean things up a bit, don't you think?" Jerry concluded, with his question delicately poised and pointed.

"Somebody does," Victor admitted, thinking deeply.

"They risked their lives, as well as their business prospects," suggested Jerry rather artfully. "If we don't hang together——?"

"We'll all hang separately. Yes, yes, I know," broke in Robinson with an eagerness which showed that he began to take the bit. "Of course the present situation isn't quite as desperate nor the appeal as heroic as that."

"If it was there'd be more volunteers, no doubt," said Jerry. "You know, Victor, somebody's got to make the fight. Miss Buckingham and I are agreed on that."

"Miss Buckingham?" Victor looked up sharply.

That Jerry should have made mention of Ruth thus inevitably bringing out the story of that recent compact between them, half play and half earnest, but whether play or earnest, rather a sacred thing, showed how frankly he was laying all his cards on the table with the man he was asking to join with himself in a great sacrifice for a great cause.

"We're—we're pretty friendly," Jerry explained, and then he went on and told Victor about the Save-Philadelphia party with at present only two members. "I haven't consulted her, but I'm sure she'd agree with me that you're the next man to have in our party. It's a big contract, I begin to realize," the young man concluded with a sigh, as he lifted his eyes to gaze at the pigeons circling that architectural pile known to Philadelphia as its City Hall.

"Do you know what bites me?" inquired Victor gravely. "It isn't any spread-eagle appeal to patriotism. It's that little girl down there."

Jerry laughed for pure joy.

"Then you are with us?" he said.

"For Sylvy Aurentsky!" declared Rollinson, standing up.

"Two good fighters!" chuckled Jerry. "We ought to be enough to trim 'em."

"Two good fighters and one innocent by-stander," laughed Victor.

"Miss Buckingham's not the by-stander type," declared Jerry loyally, "though she may be innocent."

"But how long will she remain innocent? Buckingham's the king-pin of it all," declared Rollinson.

"The last battle will be fought right in front of his castle."

"I can't believe it," declared Jerry, "I know Mr. Buckingham."

Victor laughed ironically. "But if the trail does lead to him?"

"Why, we'll fight right on," said Jerry grimly.

"But we'll have to let the lady step out."

"And yet," hesitated the lover. "I don't look for Ruth to do that. I'd rather expect she'd go inside and lead the old man out."

"Which is wild enough to remind me that we've both been talking pretty crazy," broke out Rollinson, too sophisticated to be caught long in a heroic pose.

"Send Aurentsky to me the minute you get hold of him, and I'll get going on your Maldono. The way to get busy is to get busy. So long, Jerry."

The two friends clasped hands and stood for a moment without speech looking level into each other's eyes, a fighting scion of the blue-steel aristocracy and a man of the fighting plebes.

CHAPTER IX

THE TRAFFIC IN FRANCHISES

JERRY went down in the elevator, greatly elated. He had felt the need of alliance with someone who knew, who was sophisticated, who possessed accurate knowledge of the devious ways of the machine, of its wide ramifications and the subtlety as well as the brutality of its methods; someone who would both instruct him and work with him. In Victor Rollinson he had enlisted such a man. There was no stancher, surer figure of a fighter in all Philadelphia than he. Plans were as yet inchoate; but that did not matter. Circumstances should guide them in the beginning. The first thing was to aim a blow at Joe Maldono.

"To the Works," said Jerry to his chauffeur, and arrived at his desk at about 11 o'clock, where he found various matters demanding his attention. One was a new set of specifications from the Government for cutting tools for the Watervliet Arsenal. Another was a hurry order from an arms manufacturer at Bridgeport, working on a war contract. There was a report from the chemist on the new process steel and a report from the testing shops as well. The two were contradictory. The tools from the new steel did not perform as the chemist's report indicated they should. This necessitated conference and a reëxamination of the whole subject.

Jerry was feeling very fit this morning. He set the time for the conference at 3; he galloped through his correspondence; he settled a detail about the position of the heavy forging machines in the new plant, and next went for his daily hop through the factory. This was a function of Jerry's day which he seldom omitted.

Beginning at the top of the Works, he took a swift cantering walk over the entire building, descending from floor to floor, stopping here and there for a question or a glance at what was being done; generally pausing at the desks of assistant superintendents and foremen to glance at progress reports or to answer an inquiry from one of them, and, as he moved, seeming to inject some of his own splendid vigour into the very machinery about him.

Jerry prided himself upon knowing each of his workmen personally. This probably was an exaggeration, but he knew most of their faces, and liked to nod to the men as he passed. It built up a feeling of personal interest, and of cordial relationship—it bound the workmen of the Archer Tool Works into one great family, did this smile of Jerry's, so that now as, with his quick, snappy walk and his ready smile, the young man passed along it seemed as if an electric ray of good feeling made its way into every nook and cranny of the entire six floors.

When this peregrination was complete Jerry turned to the office, feeling a pleasurable glow of satisfaction in the consciousness of hammers falling, wheels turning, forges glowing, and production marching steadily forward.

Glass partitions separated the main and the private offices of the Archers from each other.

"Hullo, Paul," Jerry sang out, entering his brother's door. "Who's the heavy party in with dad?"

"Rand," said Paul. "Jim Rand. They are coming to terms on the franchise."

"Terms? We'll never come to terms on that!" exploded Jerry. "Look here, Paul, we're not going to buy that franchise; we're going to get it right. I want you to stand by me on this."

"Stand by you? Man, you're crazy."

"I'm so crazy you depend on me to run the Works, don't you; and to organize the new plant as well?" There was something almost fierce in Jerry's demeanour

as he lowered his face to confront Paul, who was sitting.

"Why, of course, old man; but——"

"Then I'm crazy enough to know what I'm about now."

"But listen, Jerry, old man!" and Paul struggled to his feet. "I'm going to surprise you. Here's something I didn't mention Sunday when you were pulling that long-haired talk out at the house under the influence of the crack you got over the head. The fact is that at first I felt the way you do about this franchise hold-up; and I tried to get the permit from Councils in the regular way—the way we ought to get it—but they've held me up for seven weeks, just laughed at me, and a week from Monday we've got to begin to lay that track or it won't be read, to handle the materials for factory construction."

"Is that so?" exclaimed Jerry, listening at first with gratification; then he frowned.

"Makes me all the more determined," he declared.

"Paul, I warn you now, that if you pay Jim Rand one cent for that franchise, I never turn over a hand in these Works again. Do you get me, brother?"

Jerry's voice was low, but every muscle of his face was tense, and the steady light of his eye told how deeply he was in earnest. For a moment Paul was stunned by such an ultimatum. His dreams of huge profits in the new factory were as much built on Jerry as an organizer and production engineer as they were on faith in his own abilities. Without this talismanic younger brother, every prospect faded except one of confusion and failure.

"Why—why——" stammered Paul, the weaker character yielding quickly and inevitably to the stronger. "I never knew you felt that way about it."

"Well, I do," declared Jerry. "Come on in—there's not a minute to lose. You sprung this on me so suddenly there's been no chance to talk it out with father, and I've got to put it over by main strength. Com .on."

The two brothers stepped into their father's office. "This is Mr. James F. Rand—my sons Paul and Jeremiah!" said Mr. Archer.

Mr. Rand acknowledged with a nod, but did not scruple to arise. He appeared as a man in whom physical strength had once been the most striking attribute, but the muscular development had been overlaid and rounded and festooned with fat. The cheeks were jowled and the chin was pendent, the lower buttons of the figured waistcoat were pressed into very great prominence as the specialist in franchises leaned back in his chair, and the visible expanse of that waistcoat was rotund and considerable. This primitive largeness of Mr. Rand was heightened by his jewellery; his seal ring was like a lump of gold upon the huge finger it encircled; the links of his watch-chain suggested forgings for an anchor line, while the brightness of his diamond stud violated the dimming law.

This coarseness, however, was overlaid with polish—some of which was natural, as, for instance, on the dome of the head, which was bald and gleaming; the patches of black hair upon the sides were also glossy and had been barbered into waves that were almost marcelled. The gentleman was closely shaven and massaged till his abundant features wore a sheen. The small eyes twinkled brightly and the wide lips smiled easily. Finally a certain oiliness exuded from Mr. Rand's manner and drooled from his speech. The total effect, therefore, of the picture presented was of something smooth. The discerning would even say of something slick.

To Jerry, however, the sight of this highly lubricated and extremely self-satisfied person in intimate discourse with his father was like an affront. He saw in Rand a materialization of the machine he proposed to fight, a huge, carnal creature, which managed to present a fair exterior, but was innately vulgar and now gross and overgrown from battenning on the poor and helpless.

"Understand you have been having a little trouble

about a franchise," Mr. Rand began urbanely, addressing himself to Paul.

The bland suavity of this, in view of his recent experiences, irritated Paul, and made it easier to play the part his brother had demanded of him so unexpectedly. He snatched at the remark like a challenge and responded with accusing directness.

"Mr. Rand," he said, "we want a perfectly legitimate franchise that it is to the interest of the city to grant us, and we cannot get any sort of action out of Councils after two months of persistent effort."

Mr. Rand smiled benignly, thereby making another contribution to Paul's fund of unpleasant feeling on the subject.

"Mr. Rand was just saying that he can guarantee us the franchise within forty-eight hours at any time the move is made—for the consideration already understood, of course," observed Mr. Archer, by way of making progress.

Jerry was ready enough to speak, but looked to Paul. As the older he should announce their decision, and the young man after only two minutes of Rand was quite ready enough to do his part.

"Jerry and I have been talking that feature over, father," he began, rather hesitantly, as wishing to show the consideration due to a father, "and I don't think we'll take our franchise that way."

"We meant to go over it with you, father," interrupted Jerry, "but I did not understand Mr. Rand was coming round so soon."

To say that Henry T. Archer was amazed was putting it rather mildly; but the respectful manner of his sons made it impossible that he should take affront. The new factory was really the boys' enterprise and they had a right to the determining voice in every decision which concerned it. Now he questioned only their business judgment; but to a man like Jim Rand no sign of dissension between the members of the corporation must be revealed. Besides, Henry T. disliked

Rand personally and had been made very uncomfortable by the man's coarse self-satisfactions and vulgar assumptions. However, the boys must be prevented from rushing into anything so rash as this without realizing there was another side to the case.

"We've been at it virtually two months by ourselves," he reminded, "without getting very far."

"So Paul tells me, father," exclaimed Jerry, "but we must not surrender. I've been thinking pretty deeply the last few days, and with all respect to you, I simply cannot be a party to this transaction.

"The whole city is rotten with this habit of purchasing privileges. That's the trouble down in the 'Bloody Fifth.' Justice, rights, laws are not dispensed or administered in the courts openly and fairly to all. They are for sale at private bargain. A man buys protection—he buys the right to violate the law, and by that he gives himself into the power of the machine and adds to its capacity to wrong somebody else.

"The franchise we are asking for is in the interest of commerce, of manufacture, of the general prosperity. If we consent to pay this—this tribute, it rivets the shackles more tightly upon ourselves, and we are just as culpable as the little Jew on South Street who sells his vote in exchange for the privilege of keeping his store open on Sunday."

Mr. Rand's expansive features assumed an expression of distress, and for some seconds his benevolently uplifted hand had pleaded that he might have entry to the conversation.

"You've got it all framed up wrong, Mr. Jerry—excuse me for saying so, but you have," and the small dark eyes of the trafficker in franchises looked unutterable regret that he and his occasion for existence could have been conceived so erroneous by one so worthy as the younger son of Henry T. Archer. "You're confusin' very different things, I assure you. Doin' business, whether it's makin' tools or getting franchises, is a mere matter of knowin' how. You didn't get that

franchise because you didn't know how. I do know how—and I'm sellin' you my knowledge, just like any other expert."

The bland effrontery with which this statement was made, together with his perception of the lie that lay behind it, maddened Jerry.

"Bunk!" he exclaimed in disgust. "Mr. Rand, I have seen the teeth of the beast at work in the last few days: and I tell you frankly that we will never consent to pay a bribe to get from the city Councils that which justly belongs to us."

"A bribel" Mr. Rand did not break out in anger. Gentlemen of his profession are neither so thin-skinned nor so undiplomatic as that. He merely looked another installment of surprise and grief at being so continuously misjudged.

"The five thousand dollars is not a bribe, I assure you, Mr. Archer," he drawled, "and I overlook in your remarks, Mr. Jerry, anything which might be construed as an unpleasant intimation toward that which I am sure is unintentional. I repeat that the money is merely a fee for putting my professional skill as a lobbyist at your disposal. It does not go, I assure you, in any single part to the members of the committee who will approve this franchise, nor to the members of Council who will vote for it. It goes to pay the costs of keeping my own office and of keeping me. A part of my legal business is specializing in Councils. I have known some of these men for twenty years. I helped some of them to get into Councils and to stay there. They come to me for advice. I do 'em favours. They learn to trust me, to have confidence in me—I have never misled them. They are—I may say it to you—they are not exactly superintelligent men. They don't understand you nor your language. Some of them are even suspicious of you and of your motives."

"They do understand you, I suppose?" Paul put this question and kept the suspicion of a sneer out of it, which Jerry would not have been able to do.

"They do, yes. And I ask you, Mr. Archer"—
Rand had turned and was addressing the father now—
"I ask you if it is not perfectly legitimate and natural
that such a profession as mine should grow up in a city
like this, and if my services are not entitled to com-
pensation? It is as legitimate for you to employ me as
for you to secure the service of an expert chemist or a
physician. My practice is legislation. That is the only
difference; and I exist in response to a popular demand."

"The reasoning is smooth, father, but false," inter-
vened Jerry. "It is totally undemocratic. It is
utterly subversive of free government. If his fee is
not a bribe direct, it is a bribe implied. If it does not
corrupt Councils for us to pay you, Mr. Rand it corrupts
us to pay you for that to which we are legitimately
entitled without paying. If it is true that my father
and I do not speak the language of the men who make
the laws of this city, it is time we learned that language,
time we taught them that as reputable business men,
employers of labour, and as wealth-producers, we are
entitled to trust. Or, if we are not worthy of trust, it is
time we made ourselves worthy. And I tell you
frankly what I told you before, we will never submit
to pay one cent of tribute to the corrupt political ma-
chine of which you are a part."

Mr. Rand flushed but he held his peace, waiting
for Henry Archer to speak.

"We must have that franchise within two weeks,"
declared the father, addressing his two sons. "With
all that we have at stake, and all that the Govern-
ment, now at war, has at stake, I think, boys, we
shall have to come to some sort of term on the matter
inside of ten days."

"That's another point, father," remembered Jerry,
standing up in his earnestness, "the very work of the
Government is being held up by the impudence of this
band of thieves down at the City Hall that will not
do their duty to the Commonwealth until somebody
crosses somebody's palm with a bribe."

The face of Mr. Rand grew redder, but he still controlled himself, only remarking sarcastically:

"It is not very polite to call the men thieves whom you are asking for a franchise."

"Jim Rand," exploded Jerry excitedly and menacing the lawyer with a quivering forefinger, "I do not propose to get that franchise by being politic, but by being right. Father," and he turned to Henry T. Archer at the head of the table, "I know how you feel about this thing. You see all that is at stake in our contracts and new undertakings; you feel that we should consider the more important issue. To you that seems, naturally enough, the construction of the new factory and the enlargement of production. But to me, with the disconcerting glimpses I have had into political conditions here in the last few days—to me, the bigger issue is incorruptible government in Philadelphia. I propose this to you. This is Wednesday. Dismiss Mr. Rand: ask him to call again one week from Monday. If a franchise has not been granted to us before that Paul and I will leave the matter to you."

Rand, at first hotly resentful, stood with his own face slowly returning to normal colour while he watched the flush of moral earnestness, that to him was like fanaticism, grow upon the countenance of the younger man. Eventually a gloating smile appeared upon his coarse features and he flung a taunt as he said:

"Whatever course you wish to pursue, Mr. Archer, is naturally perfectly agreeable to me. I will only add that this interview has been unexpectedly embarrassing to me and that your franchise will cost you ten thousand instead of five."

"And you can charge the extra five thousand solely to my account, if you have to pay it, father," interjected Jerry before his father had a chance to look the displeasure this impudent threat had made him feel.

"No—charge half of it to mine," directed Paul, "that is too raw!"

"It will go into miscellaneous expenses in case we

have to pay it," declared Mr. Archer quietly but firmly, and with a slight note of defiance in his tones, for thereby he took ground with his sons and served notice on the representative of the machine that the Archers stood or went down together in whatever they undertook.

At this the veneer fell off from Mr. Rand. It cracked and peeled like chunks of custard from the face of a moving-picture comedian, and he arose and slouched forward, with chin thrust out, eyes beady and mean, and an ugly leer on his face.

"You people must 'a' turned into a bunch o' nuts!" he bellowed coarsely. "Now, by Christmas I'll see that you never get your damned franchisel Not till you come to me on your hands and knees. Good day, gentlemen, good day!" Mr. Rand gathered to him his hat, his gloves, his cane, and stalked out, slamming the door behind him.

"Father!" exclaimed Jerry, rushing at him joyfully. But Mr. Archer was not particularly responsive.

"You put me in an embarrassing position with this mad hypermorality of yours, Jerry. I am not sure but that you've involved us in no end of trouble. I don't want to hear anything more from it now till you're ready to acknowledge you've failed."

Henry T. Archer took himself off to luncheon, but Jerry refused to be depressed by these signs of his father's displeasure.

"Dear old Dad!" he exclaimed. "He thinks we're going to fail, to involve ourselves in an awful muss, and yet he stands pat."

"I'm afraid you're going to flivver myself," confessed Paul.

"You? You're against me, too?" demanded Jerry, a note of disappointment in his voice.

"Not against you. No! I stood for you a minute ago all right, didn't I?"

"Grandly, Paul. Awfully white of you, and the more if you——"

"I'm just hopeless. That's all. I don't see the way out."

"The first thing," answered Jerry, "is to have a couple of bowls of bread and milk sent in here, and while we lunch you tell me all about your experience with Councils. Then leave the rest to me."

"By Gad, Jerry! You take the load like a man!" admitted Paul, with more of enthusiasm and admiration in his face and speech than he was wont to betray. Before the luncheon was over Paul had narrated his experiences and Jerry had announced his plan.

Paul was captured by its very audacity, and the gleam of victory he saw in prospect.

"Aggression—that's the thing," he declared. "Go over the top at 'em with every weapon we've got."

CHAPTER X

THE FIRST BLOW

PAUL, in pursuance of the new plan, hurried off to engage a crew of carpenters and sign painters, while Jerry, denying himself to all callers and postponing his conference with the chemists, sat with his tongue between his teeth and his head bent over a pad upon which he was evolving something that was designed to wake up Philadelphia. The evolution was complete at about 2:30, just in time for Jerry to recall that at 3 o'clock, chemists and toolworks to the contrary notwithstanding, he was to meet Ruth and her young lady friends on the floor of the First Regiment Armory, which next week was to blossom out as the Trench Comfort Bazaar.

Leaving his brain creation on Paul's desk, Jerry was downtown being dragged this way and that by imperious young women who wanted everything created out of pine and paper from Siamese pagodas to Iceland igloos, when Paul's painters arrived at the Works and began transferring to canvas the copy which had been left for them. By 4 o'clock carpenters in force had also arrived at the Works and they spent the night in erecting, with the aid of hastily installed arc lights, the framework of the largest sign Philadelphia had ever seen.

At 8:30 o'clock next morning when Henry T. Archer, motoring downtown as usual, crossed the bridge over the Schuylkill, the elevation of which gave him his first good look at his Works, he hardly recognized them. The six-story front of dirty red brick was crowned from end to end by a huge canvas sign two stories high and a block long with letters that could be read

for half a mile. People, too, were standing on the corners in little groups, and looking toward the factory. Evidently they were reading the sign. Mr. Archer was also reading it. It said:

CONSTRUCTION OF OUR NEW FACTORY IS DELAYED BECAUSE COUNCILS REFUSE OUR LEGITIMATE APPLICATION FOR SPUR TRACK FRANCHISE ACROSS HOWARD STREET. JIM RAND OFFERS FRANCHISE IN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS IF WE PAY HIM \$5,000. THIS IS A HOLD-UP PURE AND SIMPLE. HUNDREDS OF MEN ARE KEPT OUT OF WORK, GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS DELAYED, SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' LIVES IMPERILLED, OUR COUNTRY'S MILITARY SUCCESS JEOPARDIZED BY THE INQUITOUS ACT OF A CORRUPT POLITICAL MACHINE. ARE WE HELPLESS OR HAVE THE VOTERS GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

That was all there was to it, but it was enough. Henry Archer shrank as if he had been struck. It was against every tradition and instinct of his nature, this sudden violent exposure of private business to the public gaze. It was bold, audacious, unrestrained, it was—it was indelicate. His boys had gone too far, and it was too late to stop them. For the time being he gave no thought to what the effect of that notice on their desire for a new spur track might be. He thought only of the effect on his own sensibilities.

"Did you notice anything as you came over the bridge, father?" inquired Jerry, unable to resist bursting into that gentleman's office the moment he knew that he was there.

"I should say I did," retorted Mr. Archer in carefully restrained displeasure. "I confess it was quite a shock to me."

"Nothing to the shock to Councils and Jim Rand," declared the son with enthusiasm. "It's working, father, it's working. The newspapers are calling up; half a dozen reporters are on their way out here for a story now."

"A story?" Fine distaste curled on Archer's lip. "I hope you will give them nothing."

"Nothing? Why, father, I'm going to give them everything."

"But, Jerry, it is, it is so, so common, so, so displeasing—to me—this, this exploitation of our business before the public eye."

"Sunlight is our salvation, father," argued Jerry cheerfully. "The Organization thrives on darkness. They take advantage of the natural reserve with which you as a gentleman, and others like you, seek to conduct your affairs, and use it as a screen to cover up their own crooked work. Sunlight is the worst enemy of evil germs, and so I'm going to give the papers the full story."

Mr. Archer's features tightened and for a moment he was silent.

"I suppose you're in you must go through," he conceded reluctantly, "but I don't like it. I don't like it at all. Besides, I fear it will only make them more difficult to deal with."

"If publicity won't bring them round, then Philadelphia citizenship isn't what I think it is," affirmed Jerry, as, chuckling in his exuberance, he turned and went out to meet the first of a delegation of reporters now visible in his own office.

The campaign with these enterprising gentlemen, so far as Jerry was concerned, was simply to show them the site for the new wing, acquired and cleared of encumbering buildings at great expense, the excavations for the foundation, the plans for the factory, the number of men it would employ, and the size of the payroll it would disburse. Following this, he gave a hint of the magnitude of orders awaiting this increased capacity for production—orders the failure to deliver which meant ships delayed in completion, guns delayed in construction, and a chain of consequences that ran clear across the ocean to where American soldiers would be dying on a battlefield because the

palm of a petty political boss in Philadelphia had not been crossed by a bribe.

Profoundly impressed by such a sequence of grave possibilities, for a few moments every reportorial head was bowed and every pencil busy, but the first man to get his notes completed passed in a moment from a question of world-wide importance to one absurdly trivial and personal.

"Pardon me, Mr. Archer," he inquired, "but how did you hurt your head?"

His head? For three days, to avoid unwelcome interrogations, Jerry had worn his hat in the office. Now in the excitement of piling up munitions for the heavy howitzers of the daily press to hurl into the camp of his enemies he had forgotten his head and tossed off his hat as he took his seat again at his desk after the tour over the new site. It was only at such a question from a reporter that he recalled the unpleasant possibilities to which an inquiry in that direction might lead. But Jerry was thinking very quickly this morning.

"My head? Oh! A piece of wood fell on it." And Jerry, showing his teeth amiably, nodded toward the main floor of the Works. His lips had spoken the truth, but this nod was almost a fib; at any rate, it was completely misleading, for the inquiring news gatherer dropped his notes in his pocket and with a final glance about him, led his confrères in a scattering to telephones, for your hustling afternoon reporter does not write; he telephones.

"They ate it up, Paul," Jerry exulted, rushing into his brother's room.

"Now if the editors only eat it up," commented Paul.

The afternoon editions showed that they had; headlines hailed the sign above the Archer Tool Works as the big local news sensation of the day. No detail of the situation outlined by Jerry to the reporters was overlooked; and their stories abounded in references to the stupidity of Councils, the venality of political

lobbyists—discreetly naming no names—and the rapaciousness of the corrupt two-headed political machine which held the city in its thrall.

As Jerry read these with gloating eye it seemed as if the fight were already won, but dropping in at his club on the way home, according to custom, his enthusiasm encountered a dash of cold water. His entrance was usually a signal for the gathering of a group of the younger element, eager for a story, a joke, or a round of live talk; but to-night the fellows approached him less readily than usual; he felt the eyes of some upon him from a distance, critically, as if somehow he had lost caste, while others came near, but with expressions of gravity or concern upon their faces.

“What—what’s come over your old man, Jerry?” Al Wheaton inquired. “Why all this grandstand in the newspapers?”

“Is that the way you estimate it?” Jerry answered, a trifle ruffled.

“Why—it is grandstand, isn’t it?” retorted Charlie Wentworth.

“It’s just what it purports to be,” answered Jerry, a trifle indignantly. “It’s notice to the people of Philadelphia that a grafter who has fastened himself on the Republican organization in this city is trying to hold up one of Philadelphia’s industries; and that we won’t be held up.” But the expression of the faces about him were cynical, bantering, or disbelieving.

“Looks like advertising to me, old man,” declared Charlie Wentworth, offering a cigarette; “I hope you get what you’re after—whatever it is.”

Jerry’s cheek reddened and he declined the cigarette.

“You people are pretty blind now,” he retorted; “but maybe you’ll get your eyes opened before this fight is over.”

“Fight!” laughed Charlie Wentworth,

“What’s the plaster on your head for, Jerry?” inquired George Mott, sympathetically, and by way of changing the subject.

) "That? Oh!" and Jerry bethought himself of his answer to the reporter. "That? A piece of wood fell on it."

"Law of attraction, I suppose," observed Horace Keller dryly, whereat there was some weak laughter, as weak as the wit of Horace, and the talk shifted to George Mott's automobile accident.

Jerry, maddened by the cynicism and indifference of his clubmates and by their failure to perceive the moral values at stake, got away as quickly as possible. To have remained there, it seemed to him, he must either fight duels or make speeches on political progress, and to have done the first would have been considered no worse form in that edifice than the last, unless the speech had contained a proposal to increase the tariff. Such speeches were always good form at this particular club.

Jerry solaced himself, however, with the reflection that the newspapers, which might be counted on to reflect real public opinion in the city, had proved much more responsive. The morning issues went further still toward satisfying him. Having more time, they handled the story more in detail, presenting not only all the salient features of the episode with an increase of dramatic force, but surrounding and buttressing them with material of related interest. One of them had a picture of Henry T. Archer, of his sons and of the factory, and all told, with more or less fidelity to fact, of the four generations of toolmakers whose product had helped to make the name of Philadelphia known throughout the world. They dwelt in particular on the fine personality of Henry T. Archer, and spoke of his sterling character and his high standing in business circles.

The morning papers, too, had opportunity to break out in editorials. These hailed Mr. Archer as the John Brown of a new movement of protest against the greedy political interests which shackled business and hampered free development unless tribute was paid

They argued that the Archers were organizing a new sort of Boston tea party.

Reading these editorials and thrilled by all those splendid headlines, Jerry congratulated himself once more and again felt sure that already victory was perching upon his banners.

He had even a vague notion that the chairman of the appropriate committee in Councils might call him up and inform him that the franchise matter had been reopened and the application approved; but no such telephone call came in. Why not? he wondered. The papers had thundered. The editors had launched their gas attacks. These little Councilmen should all be scurrying to cover under such an assault, while as for Jim Rand, Jim should have been leaving the State. But, on the contrary, it was Jim who called up, and to tell Jerry with derisive laughter that this was the best piece of advertising he had received in some time.

Jerry, however, was not dismayed by such signs of unrepentance and pinned his faith still to the newspapers. When, however, the reporters besieged him for new developments on which to keep the story alive, there were none to give. He had discharged his whole quiver full of arrows the first day.

The reporters were disappointed for their own enthusiasm had been aroused, but they did their best to "nurse" the story along by digging up interviews with various members of Councils and the committee in charge of franchise bills. This struck little fire, however, as the members generally professed never to have heard of the matter, while the committee members all and severally declared that the Archer Tool Works had utterly failed to make out a convincing case. Out of this the evening papers got no more than a scratchy two-column head, while next morning the story had crumbled to a stickful, although there were one or two belated editorials on the predicaments of manufacturers like the Archer Tool Works. These, however, amazed Jerry by conceding defeat to the Archers in their

struggle, the authors being unable to rise above the dead level of pessimistic assumption that nothing can be done.

Yet the young would-be reformer clung blindly to his faith in publicity. He had not yet learned that it is not what the papers say, but what the people say after they read the papers, that counts. Fortunately for Jerry's hopes, however, the people had begun to talk, but not the ones that came to his mind when he thought of "the people"—the merchants downtown, the traders in the Bourse, the men in the high-class clubs and hotels, the riders in automobiles and the travellers on the suburban trains—not they. These people read and smiled or sympathized or frowned but they did not talk about Jerry and his franchise. They talked about the war, about the stock market, about the income tax and the sur-tax, about baseball and about speeding up production. Talk like that did not help wring a franchise from Councils.

But there were some other people, the real people of Philadelphia, who give it character and make its government. These were the people of the neighbourhood—the real people of any city. These were the people whose sons, husbands, and brothers would make up the 700 additional employees of the enlarged Archer Tool Works; they were the landlords who would rent houses to them, the landladies who would rent rooms to them, the restaurant keepers who would serve meals to them, and the small shops who would sell them clothing and provisions—yes, and the saloons where they would buy their beer.

These folk might have been seen if Jerry had paused to regard them standing any day and any hour of the day reading that sign up there on top of the factory and considering it not at all as a revelation of disgusting civic corruption but solely reflecting on what it meant of profit or of loss to them. They were like Moritz Rosensweig, who found the city administration good or bad as it let him sell on Sunday or not. They

were like the Archers, who found the administration good or bad as it gave them a franchise or refused it. They were like Jeremiah Thomas Archer, suddenly alert because they had been clubbed on the head. These people did not care about any quarrel between the rich Archers and the thrifty Jim Rand. They did not care how the Archers got their franchise. They only saw that because the Archers did not get it, they, the residents of the neighbourhood, were losing money, and they therefore took it up as their own fight by bringing pressure to bear in the only place where they could make pressure felt—upon the thirty or more division leaders, the nine Common Councilmen, and the three Select Councilmen who represented the roots of the Republican Organization in the Forty-ninth, Fiftieth, and Fifty-first wards, which comprised the industrial community surrounding the Archer Tool Works.

CHAPTER XI

A REPORTER MAKES DISCOVERIES

BUT though the people were beginning to talk, Jerry's brief publicity campaign would have been dead were it not that this very afternoon another set of events were conspiring to pull the Archer Tool Works into the news columns again. Max Rissman, reporter on the *Evening Courant*, had finished his grist for the day, and gone on a mission purely private which involved asking a question of Sergeant Horrigan at the desk of a certain police station in a certain river ward. The hour was 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Gloom and emptiness pervaded the station house. The sergeant's room was vacant except for himself, and he was having a confidential chat over the telephone with someone at headquarters.

"Hello, Max," he interrupted himself, "C'min. Always on exceedingly good terms with Horrigan, Max sauntered behind the rail and sat down in the swivel chair on the other side of the desk. Being tired Max hoisted his feet to the corner of the desk and leaned back in lazy ease. The station record, known as the "blotter," lay before him, open on the last entry. Casually Max drew this book toward him and with that insatiable curiosity which never sleeps in a real reporter scanned the long column of names of individuals upon whom trouble in one form or another had descended within the last twenty-four hours.

The first page exhausted without revealing anything of interest, Max turned the leaf backward and let his eye travel down other pages. In the middle

of one of these the fleeting glance stopped suddenly, for his quick eye had discerned an erasure.

Nothing in a police record so excites the curiosity of the reporter as an erasure. It hints at concealment and mystery. The fact that a thing is to be suppressed is a sure sign that it is important news. Without starting or in anywise revealing his special interest, Rissman stared at the line which told him nothing but that an erasure had been made and a blind entry faked in to cover it up. Twisting his head, Max discerned the sergeant with his back to him, still engaged in his chat with headquarters. The reporter extracted from his right pocket the small magnifying glass which had served him in the past upon occasions somewhat similar, and lifting the page that the light might get under it he read as from a palimpsest the name of J. T. Archer, charged with assault and battery upon the person of Jacob Strongburger police officer.

Strongburger! Strongburger was the cop who had resigned rather suddenly, and J. T. Archer! J. T.—why, those were the same as the initials of the son of the tool man who had been getting so much publicity in the last few days. Probably it was not the same, he reasoned, but then again probably it was, otherwise—if it wasn't some important person why were they trying to cover it up? Max noted quickly that the arrest had occurred on Sunday, and then he carefully restored his magnifying glass to his pocket and carelessly let the "blotter" slide back upon the desk open once more at the page of its last entry.

The reporter was rolling a cigarette when Sergeant Horrigan hung up the phone and began to fill the corn-cob pipe from which he was wont to extract both wisdom and consolation.

"Hello, Max," he said again. "What doing here this time of day?"

"Something big," the reporter said, whispering to lend an air of importance and secrecy though there was no one about to hear. That story's broke about this

young blue-blood Archer trying to beat up Officer Strongburger and I want you to tell me what you can about it."

Horrigan's eyes were lifted suddenly from the contemplation of his tobacco pouch, but the seasoned Max repressed any start of eagerness at this assurance that his guess had struck the mark.

"Where'd you get that?" the sergeant gasped.

"You can guess?" leered Max, with a cynical lowering of one eyelid.

"Well, I did think the big fellow might let it out when I saw all this stuff about old man Archer jumping on Jim Rand that way," said Horrigan, taking the bait. "He's lookin' for trouble so hard he's likely to find it."

"Beating up a policeman probably made him feel his oats and he thought he'd go ahead and clean up the whole Organization while his blood was warm," suggested the crafty Max.

"Only he didn't get very far with Strongburger," chuckled Horrigan. "Jake lammed him for fair."

"Beat him up, you mean?"

"Yes; had him in the hospital for a couple of hours."

"Oh, man!" gloated the dissembling Max.

"The Careyites bailed him out," went on Horrigan, entirely victimized.

"The Careyites? Didn't suppose he knew such people!" Max was fishing again.

"Why, it was over one of their men, little Moritz Rosensweig, that the fight came up," explained the desk sergeant, artlessly. "Moritz runs a fruit store and works a speak-easy through his sister's restaurant over on South Street."

"But what is Archer's connection there?"

"Search me! His connection high up is what got us guessin' for it wasn't more'n an hour after we had released him on bail when the big man's voice come boomin' down here over the telephone raisin' the very roof. Strongburger was pulled off his beat and sent

to dig the fellow out of the Lafayette Club where Mike Kelly had put him to bed and to apologize to him on his hands and knees. But apologies wouldn't go. Strongburger had to resign."

"That was pretty drastic."

"Drastic's the word. Archer was going to make a fight, charges, investigations, and all that."

"But there would have to be somebody bigger than Archer behind a fight like that to make it go through at all."

"But there was somebody bigger behind him, according to our tip," intimated Horrigan. "Who'd you guess?"

"I'm not good at guessing," professed the reporter with assumptions of modesty.

"Buckingham!"

This was Max's time to look startled. "No!" he gasped.

"Buckingham!" reiterated Horrigan, enjoying his sensation.

"But why Buckingham?"

"The tip we get is that Buckingham's daughter is sweet on young Archer."

Max Rissman almost swallowed his cigarette in his excitement and made no effort to conceal his elation.

"From Ruth Buckingham, through her father to Jerry Archer, son of the tool manufacturer, and Moritz Rosensweig, who runs a speak-easy! Hully gee! but that's some story. Much obliged for your end of it." Max reached out his fervid hand.

"Keep me dark in it you know," said Horrigan.

"I'm only helping the Organization when I put you wise."

"Surest thing you know," averred Max hastily.

"And I've just got one thing more to ask of you. Ours is an evening paper, you know, and the last edition's on the press now. Give me a day's start on the story. I came to you with the hunch and I'm entitled to the scoop."

"You sure are," agreed the sergeant, "not a yip from me, Max."

Forgetting his original errand to Horrigan and nearly bursting with the importance of his news Max hurried away—nearly mad, too, with anxiety lest the story "break" in some other quarters which would reveal it to the morning papers and thus scoop him hopelessly. Praying as a reporter ever prays that no such catastrophe might happen, Max put in a very busy evening. Part of this was devoted to getting possession of photographs of Miss Ruth Buckingham and another part to an interview with Strongburger. Officer Strongburger was not exactly liberal with his information except as to Rosenscweig. He took occasion to give Rosenscweig a very bad reputation. Max next inveigled himself into the little Jew's confidence, sat in his back parlour, and by cajolery and flattery secured from Rachel a postcard picture of her husband. From Rachel, also, Max heard a thrilling story of the heroism of Jeremiah Thomas Archer and of the black brutality of Officer Strongburger. With this much of first-hand data the reporter went his way.

An hour later the dull sound of an explosion started rumours that a bomb had been let off in front of Moritz Rosenscweig's place creating wild excitement in the Yiddish quarter. As a matter of fact, this was only Max's photographer getting the flashlight picture of a speak-easy.

Meanwhile Max, weary but elated, had gone to bed, yet even in his sleep he was framing and planning his story, and at 8 o'clock next morning was writing it. By 9 o'clock the assistant city editor, Jimmie Ryan, was gloating over the copy.

"Best thing you ever did, Rissman!" he declared, slapping Max on the back. And Rissman himself leaned back from his typewriter, reflecting that all in all it was a pretty nifty piece of work. He had pictured Rosenscweig as an innocent, helpless victim of police brutality; he had portrayed Jerry as the dashing

hero who, angered at the sight of such cruelty, rushed in and fought like a tiger till beaten to the ground by blows of the policeman's club. He attributed Jerry's action in suppressing the facts of the case at that time to a fine sense of modesty, and last of all brought in the romance of that young man's attachment for Miss Ruth Buckingham. As convincing proof of the existence of this romance Max triumphantly produced the fact that Mr. Buckingham himself had voiced his wrath at the police department in such terms as had forced the brutal policeman's immediate resignation.

Ryan, meanwhile, had beckoned to Doulton to come and see the copy, the man who had covered the Archer Tool Works story and the one who had asked that disconcerting question of Jerry about how he got his wounds.

"He said a piece of wood fell on him!" chuckled Doulton, scanning Rissman's copy quickly.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Rissman. "Didn't mention that it was a policeman's club. Pretty good, what!" "Go to it, Doulton!" ordered Ryan. "Ought to be able to wake up that franchise story with a few hundred words about this man's experience with the machine in the Fifth Ward, making him take up the fight against Rand's combination in Councils. Corking good stuff there. Turn yourself loose on it. Looks as though the young man and not old Henry T. was at the bottom of the fight. Better get Jerry on the phone and see what more you can fish out of him."

This was done. Jerry was staggered to learn that the Rosensweig story was now in the hands of the newspapers; but he braced himself with the reflection that since his weapon against the machine was pitiless publicity he ought not to shrink from having the searchlight turned upon himself, but must only be careful from now on that none of his acts were such as to lend themselves to misconception if brought suddenly and violently under the public eye. How difficult, how impossible this might be, did not then occur to him. There was no time for second thoughts and

he was not much given to them anyway. The executive in his nature made him a man for quick and relentless decision. The way out with Jerry was always the way ahead.

He admitted to the reporter the facts as to the Strongburger assault, and that this experience had first led him to reflect seriously on the dangers to civil liberty of a machine like that which to-day reigned in Philadelphia. Doulton probed the possibilities with a few more questions, hung up the phone, and attacked his typewriter violently.

But after a few minutes the reporter was on the telephone again. The idea that Jeremiah Thomas Archer was in a fair way to loom on the Philadelphia horizon as a pretty big man had dawned on Doulton. He decided to investigate Jerry, and began with interviewing his brother Paul, and obtaining from him the names of certain other men in the club and manufacturing life of the city who might contribute information on the subject.

Meanwhile "conference time" had come in the office of the *Courant*. The editor, the managing editor, the telegraph editor, the make-up editor, the art editor, the city editor, and the city circulation man faced each other about the long table.

"Well, what you got?" bit out savage Morton Snow the managing editor, with a glance that swept the table.

The circulation man broke out first in defiance of conference-room etiquette, because he had a grievance and the circulation department was used to being treated like a spoiled child, anyway.

"There was a Philadelphia man in that casualty list from France yesterday, and we were the only paper that didn't play it up," he peevish.

The managing editor scowled, the telegraph editor produced an alibi, and the city editor shook his head. "Look it up! Run it down!" barked Snow. "Come on, fellows, what have you got?"

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

117

The nearest to a sensation the telegraph editor could produce was a mysterious cable about troop movements behind the German lines in Belgium.

"You, Jim?" inquired Snow. And the city editor leaped into the spot-light with the details of Max Rissman's sensational story.

"Whoopee!" chuckled the managing editor, his austere countenance assuming lines of pleasure that were reserved for scoops alone. "Circus it! First page—five-column head!"

The art editor spread his choice collection of photographs on the table—Ruth, her father, Jerry, Moritz, and the flashlight of a speak-easy.

There was more chuckling with eager glances at the pictures.

"Centre Buckingham's—Ruth Buckingham on one side, Jerry Archer on the other. Cut-in of Rosen-sweig with picture of his shop at bottom. Take all the front page you want, Malcom," this to the make-up editor. "The telegraph can carry over."

"Hold on a minute!" This was the voice of the editor-in-chief, who leaned back, frowning and thoughtful. "Have you got that story up, Jim?"

"Probably," said the city editor, and went out.

For five minutes the conference discussed details of the news of the day; for instance, whether the Italians would be able to stick it out on the Piave or not, and what Connie Mack had left to sell besides the bat boy, then the city editor returned with galley proofs of Rissman's story. The editor, still frowning, let his experienced eye gallop down the column.

"Great stuff!" he decided, "but cut the Buckinghams out of it. Every word, every picture! We're not marking up a young woman for life just to make a good story bigger than it is legitimately."

Every countenance fell, the circulation man's most of all. Half their big sensation was going.

"Young Archer looks like the goods to me," went on the editor, pulling at his stump of a cigar and still

with that frowning reflective expression that characterized his features in moments of big decision. "Play him for all he'll stand."

"Doulton's working on him now," the city editor replied. "We'll have a lot more stuff in an hour."

For a moment the group sat silent and motionless, experiencing—including the editor—that feeling of depression which comes to the oldest newspaperman when he sees a good story choked off for what the news-mongering instinct must always regard as ulterior reasons.

The managing editor broke the spell.

"Well! Get her movin'!" he rasped, and the dignified conference instantly appeared to resolve itself into a scramble to see what unfortunate should be last to leave the room by any one of the numerous exits that led toward working desks in all directions.

At this time Max Rissman was no longer in the office, having by the common fate of reporters been already chased out to South Philadelphia to employ his recognized ingenuity in digging out the details of a spy story that centred round the navy yard.

Away down on the docks he bought a copy of the first edition of the *Courant*, which should have contained his story—bought it, snatched at the first page eagerly with his eyes, muttered, and for a minute stood motionless, looting the column of his contents. Then he heaved a long, regretful sigh.

"The doggone pussy-footers—blast 'em!" would be a pale paraphrase of his comment. "It wouldn't have hurt the old bird to get his tail feathers pulled a little. Anyway, I guess it isn't some little story, what!"

And Max, like the seasoned newspaperman he was, swallowed his disappointment, extracted what gratification he could from what of his handiwork had escaped editorial censorship, and went straight on with the job in hand.

As the assault story finally stood, however, in the

later editions of the *Courant*, it was more than half Doulton's, and he had vastly enlarged the halo which Rissman had placed on Jerry's head. He made of the younger son of Henry T. Archer a future great man. From Paul he had obtained the facts in which he gave the young man the major credit for the franchise fight. He showed that neither his chivalrous defense of the little Jew nor his vigorous attack upon the political machine were the result of mere accident, but made them appear as outcroppings of deep ledges of character. He revealed that Jerry, in a city remarkable for forceful executives in industry, had already achieved an enviable reputation as an organizer and as a production engineer and that his papers and addresses, indeed, his mere opinion, had been listened to with respectful attention by societies, conventions, and associations which concerned themselves with principles of factory management.

But Doulton had also gleaned that in college, despite an ingrained modesty that kept him from ever seeming to appreciate his own abilities, Jerry's talents and personality made him a leader, and to prove his fighting spirit, cited how the young fellow forged to the front in sports up to the time when an unfortunate accident developed the weakness of his knee which, while in nowise hindering ordinary activities, made the strenuous life of an athlete or a soldier impossible for him.

Even Henry T. Archer found his own appreciation of his son's admirable qualities enhanced by the reading of this narrative. It had the same effect on Paul, and rather fixed the young man in a position of ascendancy over their two minds—a position which, though he may have occupied it before, they had not hitherto recognized.

"But it is very distasteful to me! Very! All this!" declared Henry T. with a wave of his hand over the spread-out page.

"All the same, Dad, there's mountains of truth in

it," averred Paul. "I used to think Jerry was either a blamed fool or a wizard. Now I know he's a wiz, all right."

"The question is: How's that franchise coming along?"

"This will help it," declared Paul.

"No," said Henry T. "No! It widens the breach. It'll make it more a matter of pride with Rand than ever to see that we don't get it."

"Then it's up to old Jerry to butt his way through," declared Paul. "He's got so much faith and optimism that, bless me, I can't help but bank on him to win out."

Something swelled up in Henry Archer's throat and he coughed violently.

"Confound it, Paul," he said presently, "I bank on him, too, and away down inside I think he's more than half right, or I'd never have let him commit us this far."

But other people than his father and brother were at about this time staring at the evening edition of the *Courant* and making swift appraisal or reappraisal of the personality of Jeremiah Thomas Archer. One of these was Willard H. Buckingham. Up to now he had rather smiled at the attack of the Archer Tool Works upon the political combination in control of Councils and the city government. The attack would fail, of course, and Jerry would get a licking which would do his bumptiousness good and himself no harm. If, on the other hand, the unexpected happened, and his assault threatened to do any sort of damage to those fortifications behind which extensive Buckingham interests lay concealed, why, the financier could, with a crook of his finger, call Jerry off and the big bosses would come fawning to lick the hand that had helped them.

But now Mr. Buckingham sat in his imposing offices with a frown of rare displeasure on his brow and teeth biting savagely at the ends of his moustache.

"Phone Mr. Jeremiah Archer that I want to see him

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

121

at 4:30," he said brusquely to his secretary, and turned to other matters.

One of these other matters was a card which for some minutes had been lying on the corner of his desk.

"Oh—send Ordway in," he called out as the secretary was departing.

Mr. Ordway was a millionaire, a merchant, a manufacturer, and a contractor, but his enterprises on all sides drew their chief sustenance from the coffers of the municipality; therefore, his major business interest was politics. He was a heavy-shouldered, pasty-faced, sardonic person whose uncouth manner and mordant humour commended him to many people, but Willard H. Buckingham was not among his admirers. The two hunted together but hated each other. Mr. Ordway entered wearing a satiric smile, and Mr. Buckingham's face failed to gladden. It only lighted craftily.

"What game now?" Mr. Buckingham's manner seemed to say.

"Only a harmless five-cent ante," Mr. Ordway's seemed to assure.

"You saw the *Courant*?" he inquired.

Mr. Buckingham grunted—unpleasantly.

"Here is what they were going to print," and Mr. Ordway tossed a smudgy strip of paper on the desk.

Mr. Buckingham, with that exaggerated fear of unfriendly strictures in the public press which obsesses so many rich men, pounced upon that smudgy strip. It was a galley proof of Rissman's original story which a word from the editor-in-chief had killed. Mr. Buckingham read it ploddingly to the end, his high, white brow becoming suffused with fiery red.

"They were going to print this?" he asked savagely.

"Pictures, too," emphasized Ordway, enjoying the annoyance his information had caused.

"And you prevented it?"

"No; Preston killed it himself. They had sense enough to be afraid of it; but it just shows what might

happen when an idiot like young Archer starts running amuck. Besides, a chap that's as vulnerable as he is isn't very smart to go to throwing stones."

"What do you mean—vulnerable?"

"Why, the young fellow's got a woman down there in that ward."

"A woman?" Mr. Buckingham, in spite of himself, was slightly dazed.

"Pretty little Jewess."

"Nonsense! Young Archer was never in the ward before till that Sunday morning."

"Wasn't he?" inquired Ordway, tantalizingly.

"He went there to attend a meeting of the Italian Church."

"Did he?" mocked Ordway again. The ugly sneer in his manner was fast upsetting Mr. Buckingham's composure. Not another man in Philadelphia dared bait and mock him like this, and Ordway was always doing it.

"Ordway!" he exclaimed, exasperated. "I don't have time for innuendoes. If you have got anything to say reflecting on young Archer's character, say it and get through."

"From what I hear it don't reflect on his taste at all," drawled Ordway, maddeningly.

"But damn it," and Mr. Buckingham did not even care what fellow-vestryman of St. Paul's might be about to hear him swear. "What is his relation to the girl?"

"Stuck on her!" answered Ordway tersely. "He's been in the ward many times to see her. He went there Sunday morning to see her and did see her. She was right there screaming when the beating took place, and if it hadn't been for her there wouldn't have been any beating. That's what it was about—a division leader down there had his eye on the girl, and when he saw this young fellow hanging around, dazzling the ward with a sight of his limousine every day and winning the squab away from him, why, he set a little trap and the young man walked right into it."

"An outrageous falsehood from beginning to end," declared Mr. Buckingham, eyes glaring.

"Is it?" inquired Ordway again, in that cool, exasperating way. "Is it?" There's another chapter to the story. The girl hung around the Lafayette Club last Sunday till he came out to go home and talked to him again. A couple of days after that he went prowling through the ward with his car following him, and Sylvy Aurenstsky—that's the girl's name—hasn't been seen since."

"What do you mean to intimate by that?" demanded Mr. Buckingham.

"I mean that Jerry Archer took that girl away and is keeping her somewhere."

"Ordway," said Mr. Buckingham, after regarding his visitor steadily in silence for an appreciable interval of time, "malice makes you a credulous fool."

"Damned if I know what makes you one," said Ordway coolly, "but something does."

There was no answer to impudence like this except a blow, and Mr. Buckingham was not a man of blows, in the physical sense, that is, but by mutual consent the interview was over.

"I will keep this," said Mr. Buckingham stiffly, dropping the strip of galley proof into a drawer of his desk.

"I don't know anybody it concerns more," remarked Ordway, unpleasant to the last.

"I want to repeat," said Mr. Buckingham, by way of final defiance to his caller, "that I consider slanderous and utterly false the story you have told me about young Archer, and I want to warn you that if a line of it comes to the newspapers I shall hold you personally responsible."

"You will, eh?" said Mr. Ordway, and took himself out.

Mr. Buckingham was shut in for the next five minutes wrestling with shock and ugly misgiving. His attitude toward humanity was one of cynic incredulity,

and yet—Jerry Archer had seemed—why, Jerry had seemed like an own son; and sons—but all men are somebody's sons. Jerry was impulsive, pleasure-loving, human, and the girl was beautiful, susceptible, smitten. What more natural, therefore . . . ah, bosh! . . . Mr. Buckingham, never a man of very much imagination, metaphorically dumped the whole brainstorm of slanderous words and defamatory thought sequences into his wastebasket and rang for the next caller.

CHAPTER XII

THE SIGN WILL NOT COME DOWN

THE telephone message of Buckingham's secretary summoning Jerry to the financier's office had found that young man clearing his desk and making ready to drop in on Ruth at the armoury amid the confusion of preparation for the Trench Comfort Bazaar. Fortunately there remained time to give himself this pleasure before going to Mr. Buckingham's office. Had Ruth read the paper, he wondered, but made sure that someone would have called it to her attention. This surmise proved correct.

"Oh, Jerry! Isn't it wonderful? Wonderful!" she exclaimed at sight of him—"the things the papers are saying about you. Oh, I'm so proud!"

And there was a sheen of admiration in her eyes that was almost the glisten that comes from happy tears. Jerry knew that if he could have asked her then—right then—but he couldn't. The young people were pressed apart by the crowding round of other ladies, young and old, who came up to smile on him and to congratulate or banter.

And when at length they were alone again Ruth's mood had passed over the peak of admiration and descended to a stage of less feeling and greater volubility.

"How is the franchise fight coming on? What a bold thing it was to do. Paul tells me it was all your idea. And where have you been keeping yourself these three days—hardly to telephone me even?" These were some of the words that tumbled helter-skelter from the girl's eager lips.

"I've been pretty busy," sparred Jerry, with an apologetic smile, "but I did write you two sweet little notes, didn't I?"

"And they were sweet. But notes are only notes," complained Ruth with a pout.

"Things have kept me travelling night and day," went on Jerry; "this bazaar construction, for one thing. But it's going, rather, isn't it?" and he looked round him at booths and stalls taking shape so swiftly amid the rip of saws, the beat of hammers, and a vast confusion of tongues and movement of human bodies as material for construction and decorations and stocks of goods on sale or exhibition were being hurried this way and that under the impelling hands of all sorts of labour, male and female, paid and unpaid, professional and nonprofessional.

"Beautifully!" approved Ruth with emphasis and went on with a most engaging look of sympathy. "I won't complain," she said contritely. "You've done what I asked. But tell me about Sylvy."

Jerry's countenance fell. Sylvy was the reason why he had kept away from Ruth these three days when so much was happening. No word had come from Kelly, and he did not want to tell her that he had lost the little Jewish girl nor to depress her with the story of Maldono's machinations, which already had beggared Aurentsky and might be expected to do worse if they were not checked. He gulped and stammered.

"The fact is—Ruth, we can't find Sylvy."

"Can't find her?" Ruth's face went white with a woman's intuition of the true ground for alarm.

Briefly Jerry related the story of Maldono's plot against Aurentsky and its apparent complete success.

"Jerry, that man must be punished!" Ruth declared, her eyes flashing determination. "He must be put under arrest immediately."

"He will be—just as soon as I can locate Aurentsky to swear to a complaint. And, by the way, we have

a new member of our party—our Save-Philadelphia party,” and he told her of Victor Rollinson.

“Isn’t that just splendid!” declared Ruth, eyes aglow; “but it’s rather absurd, don’t you think, this not finding the Aurenstskys? A whole family like that could hardly be blotted out. Let me”—and her eyes lighted with that sublime faith in one whose power had never disappointed her—“let me tell father. He’ll find them for us in no time. It’s almost like magic or—E. Phillips Oppenheim—the way father can reach out and pick a person out of the unknown. Why, we found you in twenty—”

The eager young woman, plunging on with encomiums of her father, interrupted herself at discovering that Jerry’s expression had grown apathetic and almost unwilling.

“Ruth,” he said, shaking his head solemnly, “I don’t want you to mention Sylvy to your father.”

“But why not?” The girl’s face looked amazement.

“Trust my judgment in this one instance, that’s all,” urged Jerry quietly.

“There you go—perfectly manlike—‘trust my judgment!’” reproached Ruth, ruffling up. “This, of ours, is a man’s and woman’s party,” she declared. “It is based on the assumption of equal capacities in the sexes. You and Victor Rollinson may outvote me, but you simply mustn’t, mustn’t resort to that ancient masculine ‘trust-my-judgment’ thing. That isn’t to be done any more, you know. At least between us.”

The picture Ruth made as, with a mixture of frowns and smiles, she urged her point was altogether charming. Jerry laughed admiringly and apologetically.

“You are right,” he confessed. “and I was absurdly, ridiculously, masculinely wrong. I should have explained and hereby I do. The Aurenstskys are timid; they will be more fearful than ever now. They must not be frightened. If anything is to be done for them, it must be done by us—you and I and Victor—with methods that we will devise. For your father, in his

vigorous way and with the instruments he would employ, to go after them would be in all likelihood to put the Aurentskys in a state of mind where we could never help them."

"That is perfectly reasonable, and I can understand it and assent to it. Always be reasonable—always let me understand things, won't you, Jerry?" urged Ruth with a sudden impulsiveness.

"Why, surely," agreed Jerry. "We shall undoubtedly locate the Aurentskys soon, and I'll take you into counsel immediately. I shall have to go now," he concluded after a hasty glance at his watch. "I have an appointment with your father."

"With father—what about?" Ruth was again all delighted interest.

"Can't imagine. His secretary said he wanted to see me at four-thirty."

"Oh, it must be to rally you about the newspaper story, and to congratulate you on it," exclaimed Ruth with enthusiasm. "It would be jolly to listen behind the door."

"I wonder if it would," reflected Jerry, going down in the elevator.

By good fortune his runabout worked its way through the downtown traffic with some minutes to spare. Having Sylvy now freshly on his mind, he resolved to use these minutes in an effort to stir up Michael Kelly on the chance that he might reach him by telephone at the Lafayette Club. Fortunately the division leader was there and presently his voice was heard on the wire.

"Why—er—can't just exactly locate that old bird yet," hemmed Kelly. "Fact is, not seeing him round, I sort of forgot it."

"Forgot it? Why, Kelly," reproved Jerry, "I thought you understood I was very much interested."

"Well, I did, Mr. Archer, but the fact is, all this newspaper talk about you fighting Jim Rand kind of backs me off the boards. When it comes to fighting the Organization, you know, why, that's fighting me."

"Oh, I see," said Jerry, a bit curtly. "Then you do not wish to assist me?"

"Fact is, Mr. Archer, I do—about the Aurentskys especially so's to get a crack at Maldono, but with the rumpus you've caused it ain't so easy. You see I might be yanked up to headquarters for lendin' aid and comfort to the enemy—you bein' said enemy. Understand?"

The personal friendliness of Kelly was, after all, unmistakable, and Jerry, who had really depended a good deal on the amiable division leader, chuckled responsively.

"What am I to expect then, Kelly?" he inquired.

"Best expect nothin'," suggested Kelly warily; "but see if you don't get something all the same—maybe a letter without any name signed to it that tells you what you want to know."

"That's a friendly intimation right enough," said Jerry. "Only let me add that I shall watch my mail with unusual anxiety for the next day or two."

"Gim'me timel Gim'me timel" urged Kelly, his voice getting far away as he prepared to disconnect.

At the exact hour of his appointment Jerry was waiting in one of Mr. Buckingham's tiny two-by-four glass-walled reception rooms. A few moments later he was being ushered into the presence. The financier's glance was not the benign one with which he was accustomed to welcome his young friend.

"The old boy's peeved," was Jerry's irreverent reflection.

"How are your scars?" demanded Mr. Buckingham, rather gruffly.

"Almost healed," laughed Jerry. "I've forgotten 'em, in fact, or had till that absurd scream in the papers this afternoon. Have ycu seen it?"

"Seen it? I have been disgusted by it. And that isn't all. Look here! This is what they were intending to publish."

Mr. Buckingham, with a manner that was dis-

tinctly severe, reached into his drawer, produced the galley proofs and passed them over to Jerry, who unfolded them to his eye wonderingly, and read with wrath mounting.

"The hounds!" he exclaimed. "Dragging Ruth's name and yours into a mess like that."

"It's your mess," said Mr. Buckingham accusingly.

"They are merely connecting our names with yours because our lives are connected."

"But, Mr. Buckingham, they wouldn't dare——"

"They didn't dare," said the manufacturer grimly, "but I don't think we have you to thank for that."

"Certainly not, Mr. Buckingham. Of course, it's just the editor's second thought—just the natural sense of——"

"It was just the fear of the power I hold, Jerry—the financial power!" And Buckingham's manner was no longer austere, but fatherly, which made what was said next all the more forcible. "The publication of that story would have humiliated me and Mrs. Buckingham beyond measure. I need hardly add that it would have made the continuance of friendship between you and Ruth impossible."

"Impossible!" gasped Jerry, incredulously.

"Exactly that," said Mr. Buckingham, with a certain air of the irrevocable, but also an air of regret, for it was very skillfully that his manner had been changed from one of autocratic reproof to that of an aggrieved friend. "Mrs. Buckingham was none too pleased with your encounter down there. Those things make talk and talk of a sort that in her circles is distinctly unpleasant. Now when you go on and make an attack on the reigning political power in that vulgar, spread-eagle fashion, you not only make a public character of yourself, but expose your friends also to the fire of unscrupulous enemies. The first weapon of those people is invariably slander and calumny—why, this very afternoon——" Mr. Buckingham checked himself, gulped, changed his mind, and went on with;

"Therefore, Jerry, I advise you to make peace with these people."

Jerry was astounded, but he controlled himself. Swiftly, but subtly, Buckingham had changed the front of conversational attack; Jerry must be subtle also.

"Mr. Buckingham," he inquired, "would you make peace with a burglar you found looting your favourite bank for fear that he would afterward slander you? Would you make peace with a slanderer?"

"When one is in the wrong, one has to get out any way one can," reflected the financier coolly, taking the situation for granted.

"Mr. Buckingham, I am not wrong," said Jerry quietly, very quietly, but with a low vibrancy in his tones, the significance of which did not escape so keen a reader of character as the man to whom the remark had been addressed.

Mr. Buckingham was surprised and for the moment silent; he was taking time to reconstruct some of his strategy, since it had become so quickly obvious that Jerry was not going to be called off by a crook of the finger. There were even indications that if told flatly to desist he would refuse to obey; and open disobedience was something Mr. Buckingham would not countenance. People might argue with him, but they must not disobey. Not wishing to force the young man into rebellion, Mr. Buckingham had recourse to diplomacy.

"Let me suggest a way out, Jerry," he said almost soothingly. "You are out of place in a fight like this. All your friends see that. Your business is manufacturing. In that everybody concedes you a wonderful future. Now you let an older and a more experienced man intervene at this point. You take the sign down and I will see that you get your franchise immediately."

Jerry could not but be softened by the mellowness in Mr. Buckingham's manner; but neither could he yield his point.

"Mr. Buckingham," he said, "if you get us a franchise you will get it by dealing with that machine with which as a matter of principle I have refused to deal. Isn't that so?"

"I will get it without quarrelling, Jerry," replied Mr. Buckingham significantly.

"I don't want to offend you, Mr. Buckingham, nor to appear either unappreciative or disrespectful, but this attitude of yours, coupled with your immense power, I think makes you really a dangerous element in the political situation in Philadelphia," argued Jerry. "You don't want to quarrel. You are a peace-loving man, and Philadelphia prides itself on being a peace-loving city, though what it often means by peace, I think, is a mere cud-chewing placidity in which it is undisturbed by any sort of too violent appeal to its conscience.

"The forces of evil capitalize that love of quiet, that popular resentment of anything which makes loud or unseemly noises in order to attract attention. They trade upon it. Because of your love of peace, Mr. Buckingham, is it not true that you, a thoroughly honourable man, are more or less in peaceful alliance with a political organization because it gives you what you demand without a quarrel, though it practises piracy on citizens generally?"

Jerry smiled—gravely, but nevertheless he smiled—as if to apply a local anesthetic to the wound he may have made; but Mr. Buckingham chose also to smile, a superior, patient sort of a smile.

"Jerry," he responded, drawing a long breath, and then speaking in placid tones of large condescension, "I have lived a good while. I have seen a good many reformers great and small come and go. I have dealt with many administrations in my effort to do the best possible for the fiduciary interests which I represent. Things in the city gradually get better; but that betterment is not achieved by agitators. It is not accomplished through the newspapers. It is

not won by noise and bombast and vulgar calling of names. It is made possible only by the slow and steady elevation of average standards of honesty in business and in politics."

"But how do those standards get advanced, if somebody doesn't pick them up and plant them higher? How do they do that without a fight?" argued Jerry again. "No, Mr. Buckingham, doubtless it seems presumptuous to you, presumptuous that a man so young as I, and with experience so limited, should differ with you, but I do. I must. You are wrong. Clearly wrong. The beast has never bitten you. It has purred and done your bidding. It has bitten me. It is biting our business now, and we are not going to pay tribute; we are going to fight. The sign will not come down."

This was open rebellion, of course, but Mr. Buckingham judged that Jerry did not suspect it. Besides, ruthless as he was or might be when the final issue was raised, he had not the moral hardihood to disclose his real position now to this glowing young man. It was more pleasant, as well as better strategy, to be regarded as only placid, contented, and unaroused, blind, deaf, and dumb, than to lift the curtain upon himself as by far one of the largest and most predatory beasts that roamed the jungle of Philadelphia politics. Accordingly, Mr. Buckingham's next manœuvre was an indulgent sigh.

"I have given you my best advice, Jerry," he said, "and you haven't taken it. If there are unpleasant consequences later, you will realize that I tried to avoid them for you, will you not?"

"Why, certainly, Mr. Buckingham," replied Jerry frankly.

The manufacturer had arisen as if the interview were at an end, but in reality he had no mind to let young Archer go without another try. The young man was evidently disposed to be fanatical, and a fiery crusader of his sort might stir up a good deal of trouble in Phila-

delphia one way or another, but there was yet one more appeal which might be made. It rather hurt Mr. Buckingham's pride to have to make it, and yet it was one that might prove efficacious where other things had failed—if Jerry loved his daughter as ardently and as tenderly as he was supposed to.

"This story," Buckingham said, tapping the proofs significantly, "is merely suppressed. Ruth has had a narrow escape. They may print it at any moment."

The idea of dragging Ruth's name into print in connection with this story seemed to Jerry quite despicable; yet to have the possibility of it used as an argument for abandoning the great moral purpose made such a possibility appear altogether trivial.

"Mr. Buckingham," he said quickly, "such a publication would hurt your smug pride and mine, but we are all of us too fearful of the tongue of gossip, too frightened by a battery of unfeeling cameras. By that we put a weapon into the hands of our enemies."

"The Philadelphia self-consciousness, I presume, you would say?" sneered the financier.

"No," laughed Jerry; "the rich man's fear of having his halo tilted. But Ruth—Ruth is the bravest of us all. Give me that, Mr. Buckingham, and I'll show it to her. If she tells me to change the plan of the campaign, I'll do it."

"Do so," said the astute Mr. Buckingham, thrusting them quickly into Jerry's hand, "show them to Ruth and to her mother."

And to her mother! That was a centre shot. Letitia Buckingham was custodian of the family social interests and a rigid stickler, therefore, for all those delicacies and niceties which hedged their high position about.

Socially she touched nothing common or unclean.

Ruth, so far as these considerations went, was both a joy and a pain, an asset and a liability. Ruth's beauty, her vivacity, her personal charm were the brilliant means of many a triumph for her mother; but Ruth had certain uncomfortable tendencies for an

aristocrat. She was intensely individual. She cared little for social achievements as ends in themselves. She did not bother to conform, and thereby sometimes offended. What a daughter of Buckingham will do she may do, was Ruth's motto. She had chosen, most obstinately of all—from a mother's point of view—to waste her time and her precious youth on the perfectly unobjectionable young Jerry Archer instead of cultivating any one of a number of prospective alliances, the consummation of which would have been of far greater assistance to a female parent with the most ambitious social designs.

"But Jerry is real; he is interesting; he dares to have unusual opinions, and you never know when he's going to break out in a new place. And then, besides, he's such a dear!"

So Ruth had diplomatically and characteristically justified her expenditure of time on the son of Henry Archer as shrewdly concealing from her mother the idea that it might be more than a mere expenditure of time as she concealed from Jerry's pride the knowledge that time lavished on him required any justification whatever.

Jerry had, however, his own inkling that Mrs. Buckingham was a thorn in his path and he stood now in her husband's office, pocketing the proofs with a suspicion that he had been clearly outgeneralled in being compelled to submit his case to her.

"By the way, Jerry, tell your father I should like to see him in the morning," said Mr. Buckingham, as indicating that the interview was finally concluded.

"Very well, sir," replied Jerry, feeling as he retired that, though he had refused to surrender or give ground, he had in some adroit way been manœuvred onto another field.

CHAPTER XIII

SWEETS AND SOURS

"MR. BUCKINGHAM'S going to try his hand on father," reflected Jerry, as he went out to his car. "Father will stand pat a week longer, anyway," he comforted himself. Nevertheless it was a very anxious young man who, though the hour was 5 o'clock, ordered his chauffeur to drive him to the Works for one final look around to make sure that nothing had developed in his absence which required attention before the next morning. On arrival, however, the first piece of business which claimed him was a telephone call from Ruth.

"Oh, hello, Jerry. We're stopping in town to-night because father and mother are dining with the Normans. Couldn't you run around and take dinner with Aunt Stella and me?"

"Couldn't I? Delighted!" exclaimed Jerry with eagerness. "Dinner's at seven-thirty, I suppose."

"Yes, but don't bother dressing. I shan't. Come around right now and we can have the whole time before dinner together and then drag Aunt Stella off to see 'The Riviera Girl.' Grace Bainbridge says it's almost entertaining."

"How untrue to form for musical comedy!" laughed Jerry. "Very well, I'll be round as soon as I can clean up the desk. Look for me in three quarters of an hour."

"So long?" inquired Ruth plaintively.

"So long!" echoed Jerry, making a humorous double-play upon the words. Turning to his desk he began attaching hurried signatures to some waiting letters, while his secretary stood by blotting each ink-

scrawl as it was made. Next, Jerry attacked a small pile of new correspondence which had drifted to the desk in his absence. One by one, with a stroke or a pencil notation, he disposed of each in succession to the very last, but this last was one which refused to be disposed of so easily. It was a letter from Sullivan, the contractor, who was to put in the foundations for the new wing.

"If I am to take in material by team for the foundations," it read, "the extra cartage cost as against the railroad deliveries assured me will amount to \$758.55. This sum we shall be compelled to charge to the Archer Tool Company."

The letter had been initialled by his father and referred to him. The amount was underscored by Henry T. Archer's vigorous pen. Jerry knew what that meant. It was to remind him that getting this franchise was not a matter of newspaper heroics but of cold achievement. The newspapers had let loose another blast to-day about the sign while they were headlining the Fifth Ward incident but no response, no indication of wavering had come from the franchise-granting body. If the thing were going right Jerry thought he surely should have had intimations from some of the Councilmen in the neighbourhood, but no such intimations had been received.

Lifting his head presently, he looked through the glass partition, and saw that Paul had gone home without coming in. His father's office was also empty.

"They're leaving me to face it alone," he grumbled, gloomily.

Yet, as a matter of fact, the young man need not have been discouraged. The people of all Philadelphia had read that afternoon the story of "Battling Jeremiah," as one reporter had exuberantly dubbed him, and had been entertained thereby immensely and moved to reflect that young Jerry Archer was probably quite a man. "What is he after, I wonder?" was the question many asked, who counted themselves very

worldly wise, and so asking, apathetically dismissed the matter from their minds.

But there were those who were in no wise apathetic about the fight that Jerry was making. Those were the people down in the neighbourhood of the tool works, whose profits would be increased by the completion of the new factory, and whose personal income was being crimped by every day its completion was delayed. These people didn't always read the papers, but every day they kept reading the sign on top of the Archer steel works. Every day they reasoned and argued and complained. The first actual voicing of what the ward folk felt probably came from Big Steve, proprietor of a thirst emporium, and it was made to Danny Sullivan, leader of the voting division in which Steve's place of business was situated.

"What's this?" he demanded roughly. "How the devil is it they don't give the Archers their spur track and let 'em get to building? Make things a little better round here, wouldn't it? God knows we need the business."

"Why, times are pretty good, ain't they?" inquired Danny, looking at the row of customers at the bar.

"Might be better," argued Big Steve, as he rang up seven beers and a highball.

And Joe Giovanetti, the restaurant man, he, too, opened up on Danny.

"What for you no letta da Archa man have da rail-track?" Joe inquired.

"Oh, we'll letta him have it "right," explained Danny, getting wiser with every word that was thrown into him about the matter. "We'll let him have it, only Jim Rand has got to get his first."

"Sure," admitted Joe wisely, for this idea that somebody must get his graft was one of those lessons of citizenship which had been taught him earliest on his arrival in Philadelphia, when he prosecuted a bootblack business, carrying his stand about in the brass-nailed box under his arm.

The tone and manner of Giovanetti was pensively submissive but the look in his big dark eyes was wistful and it told Danny something.

"Look here, Walt," he said, meeting Common Councilman Beverly. "I'm getting kicked in the shins every five minutes about that sign up at Archer's. What the blazes is the matter with Rand that he don't patch that thing up some way?"

"It ain't my funeral," declared Beverly with a shrug. "I haven't had no orders yet."

But before evening Beverly began to think it might be his funeral after all. So many persons were making inquiries and looking dissatisfied with his explanations that he went down to Select Councilman Schaff's to talk to him about it. By virtue of being Select Councilman, Schaff was also ward leader. To Beverly's surprise he found his fellow Common Councilmen, Hart and Callaway, also in Schaff's little parlour waiting for him to finish his dinner. and a few minutes later Danny Sullivan came in.

"Hello," he exclaimed in some surprise at the sight of the others. "What's eatin' you?"

"Same thing all," declared Beverly. "It's that sign of Archer's."

"That's an ugly kind of way of rubbin' a thing in on the ward, now ain't it?" commented Danny. "What you s'pose got into that bunch of Quakers?"

"Quakers? They ain't Quakers," retorted Beverly. "They're Presbyterians and they'll fight like 'ladies of hell,' which is the German's little nickname for the Scotch Highlanders."

"But we can't do a thing, boys," explained Schaff when he came in. "The war is on between these fellows and Rand and we can't afford to let 'em win."

"We can't afford to let that sign stay up there another day," declared Hart. "It's makin' 'em ugly. What do the voters care about any fight between the Archers and Rand? What do they care how they get that spur track, so they get it? It's dollars and cents

to the people in these wards. It hits 'em right in the pocket."

"It'll blow over," argued Schaff. "Bound to blow over."

"Unless something blows that sign over, it won't," observed Hart.

"By golly, that's an idea," declared Schaff, slapping his leg. "That's an idea."

"What's an idea?" queried Danny, pessimistically.

"Blowing the sign over," said Schaff. "Danny, you'll see Slim Wickes at Short Louie's as you go up the street. Send him down, will you?"

This was in effect a dismissal for Danny and for three Common Councilmen along with an assurance that the object of their call had been attained. The dismissal and the assurance came from the man who was reputed to carry the ward in his vest-pocket and to possess all necessary power for the accomplishment of whatever local designs he might determine upon; so all four went away tolerably contented.

With no cheering intimation, however, of this ferment in the surrounding wards that would lead to the meeting in the home of Select Councilman Schaff which, anticipating somewhat, had just been described, nor of what consequence might flow from it, Jerry had closed his desk, and leaving all gloomy reflections behind him, hurried off for the promised hour en tête-à-tête with Ruth. Running by Doctor Palmer's residence gave him an idea, however, and he stopped in for a few minutes then hurried on.

"Oh, Jerry!" greeted Ruth. "Why! Have your wounds got well since this afternoon?"

"Hardly that," laughed Jerry, bending and exhibiting three small plasters which had been made inconspicuous by some improvised scheme or protective coloration. "When you talked about going to the theatre I ran by Doctor Palmer's and got him to paint them with iodine almost to match my hair, so that, unless someone trains an opera glass on me, they're

hardly likely to identify your escort as the dime-novel hero of the afternoon papers."

"You're afraid of being laughed at over some of the exaggerations the headlines leaped into, aren't you?" demanded Ruth, whose mood had become serious.

"No; that would be rather a sign of weakness, wouldn't it? A fellow will have to stand for a good deal of that sort of thing who gets trapped in the spotlight the way I've been. But one thing has sobered me, Ruth, I confess, and that's knowing what they might have printed." He produced the rumpled proofs of Max's scoop that was to have been. "That's what the *Courant* was going to print, but thought better of it," he explained.

Ruth read it slowly, at first with knitting brows, but at the end her eyes were very large and lifted to Jerry's with a light of steady courage in them as she inquired: "Well?"

"That came near being published," said Jerry solemnly.

"I shouldn't have minded—not one snap," and Ruth lifted a defiant chin, which nevertheless was enchantingly soft and round. "If they want to fight you that way, it shows they are cowards—despicable cowards. Let them! It's a wonder they didn't find out about Sylvy and drag her in in some base way. Jerry! when you interfered to protect a weak little man from a policeman's bludgeon, I thought you were splendid; and now when you are fighting for your right to a franchise, honestly and honourably and bravely—you and your father and your brother, I think it's all just glorious—just as glorious as the *Courant* story they actually did print made it out to be."

The words were sweet music to Jerry's ears.

"Ruth!" he exclaimed, enraptured. "You're the morning star. You're the whole constellation. You are positively the most valiant person I've talked to. Father and Paul are bully, but they're—they're conservative compared to you."

Ruth flushed with joy at such happy extravagance of appreciation; but there was still a question on her mind.

"What was it father wanted?" she asked pointblank.

"Someone has brought this proof to him," explained Jerry. "Evidently he was enraged by it and alarmed. He reproached me and he ordered me to pull off—to give up the fight with Rand over the franchise."

"To quit?"

"To quit."

"But you couldn't do that."

"And I told him so."

"Was he angry?"

"More in sorrow than in anger."

"What did he say?"

"Little, of course, but he left the intimation clear that if the situation developed in a way to make it unpleasant for him, not one atom of all his great power would be left unexerted in an effort to make me desist."

"Including me?"

Ruth was very sober.

"Including you, Ruth. He also spoke of your mother."

"She would be your bitterest enemy if she thought your fight was somehow against father."

"He challenged me to show this proof to her and I accepted the challenge."

"Why bring her down on us now?" parried Ruth, evidently very doubtful of her mother.

"Don't you think it would be fairer to let her know at the outset just what the most disagreeable possibilities were?"

Ruth did not answer.

"You seem so very funereal, Jerry, all at once," she observed, and rather insistently, if the observation were a criticism, since she was very solemn herself.

"Ruth," he responded gravely, "I begin more and more to feel solemn. At first it was just a little skirmish of you and me and Victor Rollinson against Mal-

done and whatever political influence he could command, although Victor made me feel that might be a pretty big contest. Then there came up this fight of the Archer Tool Works against Rand and his machine over the spur track franchise, and while that goes on, day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute almost, the field of action widens. People are telephoning to me from all directions. Letters come. Men and even women slip in with their little stories of abuses, of wrongs and injustices. They indicate what is in the air; they show how widespread the evil is and how anxiously people are looking about for a leader, for a champion.

"Ruth, that wasn't just a street squabble I stepped into so inadvertently. It was a battle—most likely a war. And I don't see the end of it and I don't see the leader—unless it might be Victor. It isn't going to be easy to know how to fight the war, either, because the lines are not sharply drawn. One doesn't see now who is going to be for and who against. That makes it more dangerous. It fills the way with unseen pitfalls, but now that chance has made me temporarily conspicuous, I feel that for the moment the whole success of the campaign depends upon me. I must not falter and I must not lose this first contest. That was why I hesitated a moment in standing out against your father."

Ruth listened with a steady increase of respect that grew toward awe of Jerry as she saw their little impulse of sympathy widened till it comprehended issues of warfare for a whole city. Her mood was more than wonder and admiration: it was worshipful.

"Oh, Jerry," she exclaimed, with shining eyes. "I never knew all this was in you. I never suspected how big a man you are. I know who the leader is for this whole movement. I see him! It is you."

"Ruth!" Jerry's rebuke was actually stern. After a moment he added: "But you, too, see the matter more seriously."

The girl nodded, her features grave again. "As you say," she went on presently. "It all seemed so simple, when it was just Sylvy Aurenstky we were thinking about, and I am afraid at that time I was just—just sentimental. But now it's different. When you tell me that father may be against you it leaves me rather—rather muddled and—humbled. You know what father has been and is to me—almost a god. I know I haven't always understood him, but I've always believed in him. There's only one particular in which I do not trust him altogether and that's in what you might call his social instincts. Father is an individualist, and it somehow seems to me that none of us can be that any more. Yet, in any large question or judgment on public affairs, as between father and you, you must see that it is rather inevitable I should incline at first to his point of view."

"I do see it, of course," Jerry agreed rather mournfully. "I dared expect nothing else." He had hoped for something else, however, and felt now a great wave of loneliness sweep over him. "Oh, Ruth!" he murmured, but she was going on now with:

"At the same time, for me to desert you now, to turn my faith and friendship from you, Jerry—nothing—nobody—nobody but you could do that."

The earnest lover murmured something impulsive and reached out both hands toward her. Ruth took one of them and held it firmly as if imprisoned by her more fragile fingers, while with a change in spirit she concluded:

"And to say that there is anything which your duty impels you to do, that you must not do because of its possible effect on me—that is something which no one can force me to agree to."

"Noble and generous as Joan of Arc!" declared Jerry; "but unnecessary. You can't imagine," he reproached. "You mustn't for one moment suppose that I am going to see you exposed to the slightest danger or even to serious annoyance. You are the

dearest thing in the world to me, Ruth. The very dearest. Consideration for you comes first——”

“First of all,” interrupted Ruth, “except that undefined thing which is your very self—your soul—your honour—oh, how do we describe it without getting all preachy and didactical? But you know what I mean.”

“Yes,” said Jerry. “I know what you mean, and of course you’re right, as usual.”

Both were silent for a moment, standing by an open window and looking out into the early night, which was very black with only here and there a star. That a change was coming over Ruth’s mood was witnessed by the change in her handclasp. It had been cool and firm. It became soft and Jerry gently released the fingers and took them in his caressingly, but still preserving the silence which seemed more and more to shroud them in a mist of tenderness and mutual understanding.

“It seems to me, Jerry,” Ruth began at length softly, and in tones of the rarest intimacy he had ever heard from any lips, “as if we—you and I—might be entering the shadow of something very—very difficult. Differences of opinion, misunderstandings, separations may come. Ugly tales may be told. Choices may be forced upon me that will be very difficult to make. But let us say this much now, that whatever happens, we love each other and——”

“Oh, Ruth!”

She had confessed it at last and most unexpectedly—more sweetly than it could ever have come in any other way. Jerry could hardly contain himself, but beyond reaching out and grasping her other hand, he had to contain himself, for Ruth’s manner somehow compelled it as she went on in that same tone of tender, reflective intimacy, to add:

“Whatever happens in the future, let us say now that we shall still believe in each other—then—and in the sincerity of each other’s motives——”

"We must say it," declared Jerry fervently, "and we must know it."

"—and in the undying devotion of each to the other," concluded Ruth, for Jerry's excited assurance had been another interruption.

"You angell" ejaculated that young man, now taking her unresistingly in his arms and kissing her—the first tender kiss of love—taken under the shadow of some vague thing impending that neither could quite understand.

With wild, thrilling ecstasies that made him want to dance, to shout, to pray, to fling a challenge to all the world, Jerry felt her close to him, and drawing closer.

"Oh, Jerry!" she sighed rapturously, and whatever of trial and battle-strain was yet to come, Jerry knew that he had his reward in advance.

"Dinner is served!" announced a voice in the hall.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CRIME OF ARSON

DINNER with Aunt Stella was a lightsome affair, for that lady had preserved a vivid interest in the more obvious side of life and saw all things with a humorous eye. Besides, the young people, having imagined the worst, seemed to fancy they had thereby forestalled it and gave themselves up to those thrills and ecstasies which are supposed to possess the hearts of lovers in the first delicious moments of avowal and assurance.

"And now for musical comedy!" declared Ruth with unusual eagerness of anticipation expressed in the glance of the bright blue eyes, for all at once it had seemed that both her duty and her joy was to go and sit beside Jeremiah Thomas Archer in the most public place available. "Amuse yourself with a cigar and the very interesting evening papers while Aunt Stella and I pay some slight attention to the matter of what we shall appear in."

The twenty minutes which elapsed before the ladies came downstairs again was, by the way, the very same twenty minutes which Danny Sullivan consumed in locating Slim Wickes and dispatching him to the house of Select Councilman and Ward Leader Schaff. Since, however, Jerry knew nothing of this errand nor what it boded to him, he was entirely undisturbed in the blissful rhapsodies to which he gave himself up, for the papers lay unnoticed and the cigar refused to stay alight. Ruth! Ruth! His thoughts were only of her.

They arrived at the theatre in the middle of the first act and snuggled into their box, Ruth and Jerry

soon to forget everything but each other, and Aunt Stella giving herself up to the play.

"Not bored except when I can understand what they say," she ventured at the intermission.

"Now, really, Miss Minturn, wasn't it better than that?" argued Jerry, who knew he must say something.

"It soothes me," declared Ruth, "and entertains mildly without involving too much mental effort."

"And what more could one ask of musical comedy?" declared Jerry triumphantly.

Apparently, neither of the three did ask more of it; anyway, the box remained occupied to the final curtain.

"Did you say you had electric lights on the famous sign so that people can read it at night?" inquired Ruth coming out of the theatre, and apropos of nothing but her thoughts.

"You bet we have," boasted Jerry. "Want to run by and have a look?"

"That would be jolly," confessed Ruth, "if Aunt Stella doesn't mind. You tell Jack how to go."

"Not in the least," said Miss Minturn. "I shall be glad to see a real comedy 'prop' instead of a stage one."

"Hard on me a bit, aren't you?" smiled Jerry, and Aunt Stella laughed banteringly.

As they whirled along Jerry kept looking out of the window and gazing off to the right at every intersecting street. "Why, it seems as if the lights must be out," he decided finally and then, as the car swung onto the Schuylkill bridge, he declared with dismay, "By jove, they are out. The roof's dark. No—why—why, there's a fire up there. I just caught the flicker of a blaze! There are two of them—three of them. Great Scott! the roof's afire. No, it's the sign. It's afire in two or three places. Somebody's burning it up. I can see forms of men running in front of the blaze up there. Hurry up, Jack! Get us there quick!"

All of this monologue of Jerry's had been jerked out

in short, explosive sentences indicating greater and greater excitement until the last.

"Afire? The sign on fire. Why, how exciting!" declared Aunt Stella.

"But who could have done it?" demanded Ruth.

"Jim Rand, of course," decided Jerry instantly. "Hurry, Jack!"

But a succession of street cars in a tangle at intersecting streets delayed them twice, and it was five or six minutes—possibly eight—before they reached the factory. In that length of time they saw the three scattered blazes leap into one and sweep over the canvas and paint as if it had been smeared with alcohol. While still a block away Jerry thought he made out the figure of a man, the last of several, no doubt, drop from the bottom of the fire-escape and dash down the little alley opposite. As their car drew up in front, and Jerry leaped out, he recognized one of his own watchmen puffing up the street toward the factory gates.

"Where have you been, Jacobs?" he demanded sternly.

"Turning in the alarm, sir. The box here has been tampered with. Look, the glass was broken and the mechanism plugged with what looks like chewing gum. I had to run a block and a half to turn in the alarm."

In proof that he had accomplished this, fire apparatus began to arrive, a water tower went trundling up into the air, and almost simultaneously a stream of water was whipping out the blazing framework of the sign. The sign itself had disappeared some minutes since.

"And not a policeman in sight!" declared Jerry, in disgust.

Eventually, however, a policeman did appear and with open notebook in hand sought Mr. Archer's opinion as to how the fire started.

Jerry was sarcastic.

"Where were you," he demanded, "when three men climbed that fire-escape in plain view of anybody on

the outside, went to the roof, took plenty of time to fire the sign in several places and then made their get-away down that same fire-escape. Where were you?"

The policeman looked surprised and then sullen.

"I was by here about half an hour ago—and then I heard a pistol shot and somebody hollering over in the alley," he explained. "I went over there to investigate, but it was just a 'plant' to get me away."

"That so?" said Jerry. "Why didn't you arrest the man who ran up that alley just as you must have been coming out of it?"

"I didn't see him. I was a good ways up the alley, and he must have turned off and hid in one of the backyards."

"Come along then; let's find him," proposed Jerry, moving toward the alley.

The policeman followed reluctantly, and Jerry, after a step or two, halted.

"He's had time to escape now," he decided, and suddenly he turned on the patrolman. "You wanted him to escape. You had orders to be blind and deaf and dumb round here for a while, didn't you? Didn't you?" And Jerry, with a small crowd looking on, shook his finger in the policeman's face.

"It's none of your business what my orders are. Guess you're a little excited, ain't you, Mr. Archer?"

This was insolence and insolence of the sort that heated Jerry's blood to the boiling point, but suddenly he remembered Ruth and Aunt Stella.

"Yes, I'm excited, Officer No. 54213," and Jerry leaned close to make sure of his identification. "I'm excited. My curiosity is excited—my suspicions are excited. My desire to capture the men who know all about this thing is excited, and I expect your assistance. You come to my office at 9 o'clock to-morrow morning prepared to tell me what you know—and all you can learn."

Leaving the policeman adrift in the middle of the

street, his open notebook still in his hand, Jerry turned abruptly on his heel and rejoined the ladies, waiting in their car just outside the danger zone.

"You still think it incendiary?" inquired Ruth.

"Undoubtedly," answered Jerry.

"And what good stage management, Jerry, to bring us out here just in time to see the thrilling conflagration," laughed Aunt Stella.

Jerry laughed, too. "Does look suspicious, doesn't it? Many suspicious things about this fire."

The firemen were now descending and the deputy fire chief came over to report to Jerry that the flames had been extinguished, but that one engine and a complement of men would be left on guard till morning, prepared for a possible outbreak from flames that might now be eating into the roof, where water had not reached them. He received Jerry's hearty thanks and the assurance that a check for the fireman's pension fund would be his reward for prompt and efficient service.

"All right, Jack," said Jerry, stepping into the car, but with one final backward glance at the black front of the building and the little knot of firemen and the group of bystanders which had been attracted.

Arriving at the Buckingham residence, Jerry sought Ruth's permission to use their telephone, for he had quickly seen that this fire made his sign a newspaper story again. One after another he called the morning papers, not to tell them of the fire, which of course, they would already know, but to inform them of what he had seen and of what his conjectures were. Emerging from the den in which he had been talking, Jerry discovered that Mr. and Mrs. Buckingham had come home and were being entertained by Miss Minturn and Ruth with the story of the conflagration.

"Well," observed Mr. Buckingham, "I see your publicity bureau is still working."

"Yes, sir," smiled Jerry. This was too good an opportunity to lose. "Do you know, Mr. Buckingham,

it proves just what I've begun to suspect—that persons like Rand are not really intelligent.”

“Only the reformers are that,” observed Mr. Buckingham ironically.

“But, father, you're not attacking reformers, are you?” inquired Ruth, studying her father doubtfully.

“Not attacking them, no. There are plenty of people to do that. Reformers are very good people—sometimes; very well-meaning people nearly always; but they're bothersome and impracticable. They never accomplish what they set out to do and they make it hard for some persons.”

“What do you mean by some persons?” persisted his daughter.

“Come, come, Ruth,” chided Mrs. Buckingham, rising and moving toward the stair, as if to intimate that there was to be no extended conversation, “as if you could be interested in more than the spectacular side of an event like this. I have no doubt Mr. Archer will weather the loss of his sign and that he has already made plans for a new and grander one.”

“Quite right, Mrs. Buckingham, and I'm going now to attend to it. It will require work for the rest of the night to accomplish it, but it is my intention to have that sign back there when morning breaks—or a part of it.”

This remark, though addressed to the wife, was in effect a sort of polite defiance to Mr. Buckingham and had reference to that insistence of his earlier in the day that the sign should come down and stay down. He so interpreted it and gave Jerry one of his straightest looks, but for all of that was perfectly urbane, and indeed tendered his hand quite cordially while Mrs. Buckingham was sweeping up the stairs followed by Ruth, who tossed Jerry an impish kiss from behind her mother's back and over her father's head.

CHAPTER XV

OMENS GOOD AND BAD

JERRY knew, as he took his runabout from the Buckingham garage, that a stiff night's work lay before him if he was to make good his boast about the sign and he accelerated his movements accordingly. Driving straight to the factory and planning as he went he found all excitement quieted and the little squad of firemen watchfully on guard. Letting himself into the office Jerry immediately roused his sign painter by telephone. That sleepy gentleman, protesting at first, was made at length to understand both Mr. Archer's urgent desire and his willingness to compensate liberally for haste in the execution of such an unusual assignment.

Once started, too, the sign-man was himself a person of resources and managed by half-past two in the morning to arrive at the Works with a small complement of drowsy painters, two or three half-awake carpenters, and a small motor truck loaded with scantlings, canvas, guy wire, and painters' materials. Jerry, meantime, had realized that he must shrink the size of his sign very considerably and had prepared copy accordingly.

He got to bed late and next morning slept soundly in his room while his father breakfasted in ignorant peace till a startled telephone message from Paul, who had spent the night out of town, called the gentleman's special attention to the morning papers, in which the head of the Tool Works read with surprise and consternation that an attempt had been made to destroy his plant by fire.

"Arson!" exclaimed Mr. Archer. "Arson! They

resort to arson!" And his jaws set themselves firmly. "Jerry! Jerry should know this," he decided presently, looking up from his egg-cup. "He had better know it at once. Go and wake him, James."

But Mrs. Archer intervened. "He came in very late," she said, "and has so much on his mind now that I hate to rob him of his sleep. There isn't anything he could do—now that it's all over—is there, Henry?" Mrs. Archer's appeal was almost plaintive.

"Nol No!" decided Mr. Archer. "You are right, Drusilla!" and then sipping coffee while his eye ran down the column, broke out with: "Whv, he does know it. He was there."

"And never woke you up about it at all. Isn't he the considerate one!" remarked Constance, who, being a woman, was thrown into wonder at such capacity for silence and self-control.

"Well, I don't know that he is," grumbled Mr. Archer. "It would have been more considerate if I heard of this astonishing act from the lips of my son at one o'clock in the morning than to read it in the newspaper at my breakfast table. No, don't wake him. Let him come down when he gets ready."

And Mr. Archer, hastening through his breakfast, had his automobile round and hurried to the factory. Straining his eye for a first view of the scene of conflagration as he crossed the Schuykill bridge he was astonished to descry, looming in the midst of the charred framework, a smaller and more compact sign, that said a single question.

WHO BURNED OUR SIGN? WHY?

That was all. "Who burneo our sign? Why?" It was a question put up for the city to consider. Mr. Archer also considered it, and the more he reflected upon it the more resolutely his jaws clamped. "Shows

we're contending with anarchy," he concluded. "Might just as well fight it out now as any time."

Paul was waiting for him at the factory.

"What do you think of old Jerry?" he demanded eagerly. "How was that for a quick come-back?"

"Exceedingly apt. Jerry is proving himself a good strategist," declared the father.

Paul was greatly relieved at this indication that the fire had inclined his father definitely toward their side of the controversy. Henry T. Archer was a man who made up his mind slowly, but who, once committed, was as easily moved as foundation rock.

"There's a policeman out here to see you," said Paul's secretary.

"Policeman? Show him in! Wonder if it's Jerry's friend, Strongburger?"

Instead it was Officer 54213 who entered wearing a worried look, glanced at Paul, and stopped disconcerted.

"It ain't you," he announced bluntly. "It's another—a young man—the one that was here at the fire last night."

"My brother Jerry," suggested Paul.

"Likely," conceded the policeman.

"He told me to come to see him at nine."

"Well, it isn't nine yet."

"Ain't it? I thought it was noon," croaked the policeman, gloomily. "The newspapers are makin' a goat of me about this fire. It's getting too hot for me. I want to see somebody."

"Want to tell what you know?" suggested Paul, attempting to draw the man out.

"Not much I don't—that is, I don't know nothin', and I wanted to tell Mr. Archer so. I got a wife and four children. I get three-and-a-half a day. I got to take my 'orders' to get on the force and I got to take my 'orders,' too, to stay on the force, and if anything goes wrong they can me like something rotten. I don't know nothing, and I——"

The officer halted, for his surprised eyes had encountered Jerry standing in the door. Remembering tardily his appointment with the policeman, the young man had come breakfastless to keep the engagement.

"That is," guessed Jerry, coolly, "you don't know anything except that you were told to make yourself scarce around here for a half-hour last night?"

"I didn't know it was your factory they was after, Mr. Archer—honest to God I didn't; but you seen so much that you've got something on me."

"Yes, I have. Who was it told you to camouflage yourself for a while last night?"

"If I tell you that, Mr. Archer, it's as much as my job is worth."

"I'll give you a better job here."

"They'd get their revenge on me just the same. They'd take it out on the wife or the children. They'd——"

"Well, I don't want to know that bad," interrupted Jerry brusquely. "Not now. Leave your name and address with me, and run along home and go to bed."

The policeman, looking greatly relieved, wrote his address and went out with a clammy brow and a backward, grateful glance at Jerry who stood regarding him thoughtfully.

"There's a man of natural good intentions turned into a coward by his self-interest," he said, turning to Paul. "He's like Mr. Buckingham."

"Like Mr. Buckingham? Jerry! What do you mean?"

"Mr. Buckingham ordered me yesterday to take the sign down," said Jerry.

"Is it possible? Could they reach—could that crowd reach him?" There was amazement depicted on Paul's supposedly sophisticated face.

"Of course they couldn't," replied Jerry. "But men with the biggest business power are the biggest cowards in the world about some things. They are

not afraid of what men say about them. They are afraid of what the papers say. Mr. Buckingham is, and not only for himself, but like the policeman, for his wife and his daughter."

"Why, how absurd!"

"Not altogether absurd, as I happen to know, but the point is, Paul, that once having taken up this fight we cannot lay it down without betraying a lot of other people—the very city itself, for that matter. Mr. Buckingham cannot understand that. He wants to see father."

"Father? Have you told him?"

"I left a note on his desk last night."

"Father's going somewhere now," exclaimed Paul, looking through the glass partitions where he caught a glimpse of that gentleman donning his hat and drawing on his gloves.

"Without a word to us," remarked Jerry. "Good old dad. He must suspect what it's all about."

"He'll never throw us down now," declared Paul.

"You should have heard what he said about the sign. 'Decidedly apt,' was his comment. 'Jerry is proving a very clever strategist.'"

"Did he say that?" inquired Jerry, his face beaming.

"Yes; the fire opened his eyes. He's more determined than you or me, I think."

"I admit it was kind of fresh of me to shoot that sign right up without a word to either of you," replied Jerry, "but somehow I'd been feeling pretty much alone since my talk with Mr. Buckingham yesterday."

"It was great, old man! Simply great!" approved Paul heartily.

The story of the fire brought reporters round again, and once more it was Jerry's duty and opportunity to receive them. Among them was Doulton the reporter, who had inquired about the bandage.

"How's the place where the stick of wood fell, Mr. Archer?" Doulton asked by way of introducing himself again.

"Much better, thank you," said Jerry, joining in the hearty laugh which went round the group.

After Jerry had elaborated with satisfactory detail the story which he had telephoned to the papers at midnight and had supplied the news-seekers with the developments of the morning in regard to it, Doulton led the way back to that other story which his colleague, Rissman, had brought to light, by asking:

"Mr. Archer, what is the nature of your friendship for the little Jew, Rosenscweig?" The sudden alertness of every reporter in the group was sufficient to assure Jerry that here was a matter which the public regarded as insufficiently explained. It reminded him also that he had become rather disgusted with Rosenscweig.

"Friendship? Absurd! Why, I never saw the man before that moment."

"But you have seen him since, I believe?"

"I have seen Rosenscweig and ascertained that he was being made the victim of petty police persecution in order to make him change his affiliation in the political fight that is on over the leadership in the Fifth Ward."

"Then the intimation that you are under some sort of personal obligation to Rosenscweig is untrue?"

"Are they saying that?" inquired Jerry, suddenly serious.

"Worse than that," said Doulton gravely.

"Worse?"

"They say that Rosenscweig's living room was your meeting place with a very beautiful Jewish girl of the neighbourhood."

"What a silly lie!" exclaimed Jerry hotly.

"And that Mrs. Rosenscweig was a very complaisant sort of a chaperone."

"The fools! The liars! The wooden-headed idiots!" exploded Jerry. "But—but you're not printing anything like that!" he demanded sharply

"The newspapers are a little bit careful," smiled

Doulton, exchanging glances with his fellow-craftsman, "but cigar-store and lamp-post gossip—you know what that is. They start with the known fact that you were in the living room back of Rosenscweig's store on Wednesday."

"Well, what of that?" demanded the young manufacturer indignantly.

"Nothing of it, of course, Mr. Archer, except what people make of it; but there's a class of people down there—just as there is everywhere else for that matter—who are unable to appreciate any motive but a selfish one. They say, 'This young Mr. Archer's coming down here. What's he coming for?' That sort of thing, with the worst possible intimation in their manner of saying it."

An impatient reply had risen to Jerry's lips, but struck by the interested friendliness of these observations, he stopped to look young Doulton over again. Smooth, intelligent, fairly refined and earnest, he had revealed in the manner of this speech considerably more than the mere reporter in quest of his story; he appeared not as a mere sponge for the sucking up of popular sensations, but as a man with a point of view and a character.

When Jerry turned a glance upon the other men he read the same expression in their faces, and he realized with satisfaction that there was a group of men whose enthusiasm and faith had been enlisted and who stood ready to be a valuable aid to his enterprise.

"I see, you are warning me," he exclaimed frankly, with an air of appreciation and of hearty welcoming of them to his friendship.

"Thank you. Of course, I suppose they would seek to take some sort of advantage of a man in my position."

"The favourite weapon of a crowd like the one you're fighting is the defamation of character," replied Doulton, and then, as if in manifestation of still greater friendliness and a further desire to help, the reporter

put another question: "Mr. Archer," he asked seriously, "just what is your political ambition?"

"Political ambition!" Jerry broke into hearty laughter. "Why, I have no such thing."

"They say it is your ambition to make a name for yourself in politics."

"Is that another of the things they say? How very interesting!" Jerry was satirical. "Quite ridiculous, Mr. Doulton, I assure you. Everything concerning me which has engaged the attention of the newspapers in the last few days has been the result of an accident. A policeman clubbed a wretched little man, and I struck him. The Councils refused us our franchise, and we are fighting for it. Open diplomacy, that's all. My only political ambition is to put a crimp in the machine and the system that is plundering Philadelphia. Say that for me, will you, and say it loud?"

The reporters smiled approval, then Jerry smiled again and shook hands with them all around.

As the newspapermen went away Mr. Archer came back from his interview with Buckingham. Jerry noted him first coming along the corridor, his hat in his hand, his eyes unseeing, his features pale and determined, with indeed such a set to his jaw as the young man had seldom seen upon it. He spoke to neither of his sons nor looked in their direction, but went straight to his desk and took up his usual round of work.

"Do you get that, Paul? Not a word spoken, and did you catch the look on his face?" Jerry inquired.

"Yes, and I read the meaning of it. Jerry, we're in for an awful fight. Father is standing pat, but he must have seen something grave ahead or he wouldn't look like that."

The two brothers went through the day with a solemnity forged into their souls by this grim silence of the father, but were freshly cheered and excited to hope by the afternoon papers, which showed that the incident of the fire had brought the matter of their car-track petition back into the news columns again.

The true explanation of Jerry's embroilment with the policeman over Rosensweig was also told for the first time. The fact that the incident had been first suppressed, then misrepresented, and finally and reluctantly set somewhat in its true light by the chief actor in it, whose narrative, carefully stripped of all heroics, not only added significance to the occurrence, but increased respect for Jerry.

In consequence, the two brothers came to the close of the day's work rather contented with themselves than otherwise. The attitude of the papers encouraged them to believe that they were about to get their franchise. But, as before, nothing new developed to revive the story. Four days went by. The newspapers had ceased to mention the matter. They had headlined and editorialized and forgotten. The charred frame of the old sign still stood, however, and in the midst of it beacons out that saucy interrogation point as to who had burned it and why. The people of the neighbourhood were not long in deciding both who and why, and they began, industriously and in ways that plain folks have, of making their decision known.

Rumours of such protest in the ward began now to reach Jerry also, coming first through the workingmen in the factory and then from other channels, for it appeared that a sort of grapevine system of gathering up news of what was going on in the city was growing up of itself, with the trunk line of it running to young Archer's desk.

But Jerry did not yet sufficiently appreciate how the currents of power are turned on in a republic. He still regarded a newspaper headline as more important than what Bridget O'Malley said to Angelina Pedroni as they bent over neighbouring washtubs. He did not know how great, how tremendous the strain exerted on the crusted surface of things when those great lower and middle-class layers of society begin to heave and toss and turn over.

There were others in the city who did appreciate this,

however—men whose entire business in life it was to hear what Bridget said to Angelina and to echo it.

“Raw stuff, burning down that sign!” opined Division Leader Danny when he met Councilman Beverly.

“Rawest ever,” agreed Beverly. “Didn’t work at all. People sore.”

“S’pose when you burn up that sign you think you’re burnin’ up the trade that we’re losin’ every minute because Jim Rand don’t let the Archers get on with the new factory. What the blazes do we send you fellows to Councils for? To put money in Jim Rand’s pocket or in ours?”

This speech was made by Westcott, the baker. Westcott made the rolls that went on every restaurant table in the ward, the sandwich bread that went on every lunch-counter, and half the loaves the householders in the three wards used. Westcott computed that he would be selling 500 loaves more a day when the new factory was up and 700 more men were at work. He was a man of consequence and made his sarcastic speech to no underling, but to Ward Leader Schaff himself.

“Damned clumsy work whoever burnt up that sign,” admitted Schaff. “It didn’t make ’em forget. It only made ’em kind of mad.”

Slim Wickes had claimed \$25 from Fritz Schaff for doing this job, and Fritz was beginning to think it was twenty-five spent for high explosives fulminated on the wrong side of the line. “There’s a rumbling all through the ward. ’Tain’t in my division only,” insisted Danny Sullivan, with a gloomy headshake.

“Know what we got to do to shut off all this rag-chewing?” inquired Beverly, when the two other Councilmen of his ward gathered with him once more in the ward leader’s parlour.

“What do you think we’ve got to do, Walt?” inquired Schaff.

“We got to get that spur track franchise through so

blamed quick there ain't nothin' to it, Rand or no Rand," replied Beverly.

"That's right," chimed in the others. "I don't get nothin' else from morning till night. If we don't get that franchise quick these three wards 'll go right over to Penrose and stay there."

"I'll see the big man and tell him how things are," promised Schaff.

The Big Boss, high in his office in a downtown skyscraper, was busy—now with the details of that vast contracting business, in the interest of which he managed the city government, and now with the details of managing the government itself—but he received Schaff after a while and listened, though not patiently. To begin with, his mood was irritable. Big issues were at stake in the coming election, and he was in no temper to be bothered. Especially was he irritated that anything should happen to emphasize to the public the manner in which his Organization levied tribute on the city.

"I've heard about that row out there and I don't like it," he snapped shortly when the ward leader had told his story. "I'll see Rand about it, Schaff, and let you know."

Fifteen minutes later Rand was waiting in the outer office and presently was ushered inside.

"Jim," said the Big Boss bluntly but with no trace of his former irritability, "I've been studying about that Archer franchise fight for a week and hearin' about it, too. I don't like the way it's breaking. You're right, of course, and another time I'd say go to the mat on it and clean that young smart Aleck good. But I can't stand a fight like that now."

Rand looked hurt and unhappy.

"If he beats us once he'll fight again," the lobbyist warned. "I tell you that young fellow's got the makin' of a popular hero. He might cause us a lot of trouble."

"Nopel" answered the political potentate. "He's sweet on Buckingham's daughter, and if he gets real

dangerous we can choke him off from that side. Engaged to Buckingham's daughter," reiterated the boss with a shudder, "and a cop hammers the head off of him! It's lucky he didn't kill him. God! I had chills for two hours after I heard about it."

"Buckingham's daughter? Why, say then. Why don't you pinch him off right now!"

"Wouldn't have Buckingham suspect for anything we're settin' so light we could be disturbed by a little thing like that. Wouldn't go to him about it at all. It's too small."

"I suppose \$5,000 is small to you," reproached Rand.

"It'll be small to you some day, Jim, if you stick with me," said the Big Boss, and turned to other duties.

Rand, with an order not stated in so many words, but conveyed in unmistakable terms—an order the most distasteful he had ever been compelled to execute—still hesitated.

"Get it movin'," snapped the Big Boss shortly, and Rand, who had learned obedience in the hardest school there is, arose and lumbered heavily out.

CHAPTER XVI

WHAT DID IT

IT WAS on this same afternoon that Jeremiah Thomas Archer sat plunged in gloom. For an hour he had leaned over his desk twiddling thumbs and cerebrating over some scheme for putting his franchise fight on its feet again. Evolving nothing satisfactory he had turned to the dictation of a letter regarding the performance of the new composition steel, when an edition of the *Courant* was brought in.

Reading the newspapers eagerly had become rather a habit with him of late, and in the midst of thoughts about the new steel his eyes kept stealing to the newspaper. The letter finished, Jerry took up the *Courant*. One three-column head concerned itself with a new British offensive in Flanders; another of two columns dealt with an explosion in a colliery.

"Poor devils! Poor devils!" murmured Jerry sympathetically, thinking of the shattered bodies on the battlefield and the shrivelled, blackened ones in the mine, when his shifting eye brought up at a single-column head, right in the middle of the page where it would have claimed his attention sooner but for being over-shadowed.

"Wha—what!" he gasped, sitting up quickly, and opening and shutting his eyes to make sure the vision was clear.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" he shouted, leaping to his feet and rushing toward his father's office. "We win! We win!" and he waved the paper wildly.

"No!" exclaimed Henry T. Archer, looking up gravely.

"Yes," beamed Jerry, flaunting the paper

That was indeed the way the headline had it, but bedded in the type of the story were two statements, the first characterized by dignity and a fine self-restraint, but for all that loaded with rebuke for the blatant Tool-Works petitioners. This was from the chairman of a committee of Councils. It said:

The committee was never averse to permitting the Archer Tool Works to extend their present private tracks across Winton Street. It merely took the time necessary to make sure the interests of the community were properly protected. Deciding, deliberately, that the public good would be served by such a franchise, the committee recommended it in due course, and the permit will be issued in ample time to meet the needs of the Tool Works.

The other statement was from the Hon. James F. Rand, and its tone was crusty.

"The Archer Tool Works is a very rich and self-important concern," it declared. "Like all such, it thinks the whole business of governing Philadelphia should be halted till it gets what it wants. There never was a doubt in my mind but that, properly safeguarded by restrictions, the concern was entitled to a franchise, nor a doubt that Councils would, at the proper time, grant it. However," and one could almost hear the honourable Jim rolling one of his finest periods. "I know the character of the men who sit in Councils in this city and the majority of them are not men who can be browbeaten or swayed from their duty by bluff or blackmailing attempt of any sort. This franchise was recommended by Common Councilmen Hart, Callaway, and Beverly, of the Forty-ninth Ward, and by Select Councilman Schaff, the ward leader. It was inevitable, therefore, that at the proper time, and regardless of fuss and furore, Councils would grant the franchise."

With his two sons looking over his shoulders, Henry T. Archer read the narrative as far as the end of these two statements, and then looked up with a dry smile.

"It appears that we merely helped them in coming to a decision," he remarked.

"Assisted nature a little," chuckled Paul, and reached over to slap his brother on the back. "Old man," he declared, "you're a great assister."

"I had been given reason to suspect it would be a long and bitter fight," said Mr. Archer, leaning back with evident relief.

"Oh, we've won, all right," chuckled Jerry, "and just when I was beginning to get cold feet, too. The question is, how did we win? Why did we win? You and father hold the jollification meeting, Paul," he bantered. "I'm going out and sit down with my head in my hands and figure out just how we did it, because I've got a suspicion there are other fights we'll have to win, and we ought to know how next time."

"You are right, Jerry, there are other fights," said his father, with a gravity so deep that it incited curiosity.

"By the way, father, you didn't tell us about your talk with Mr. Buckingham," inquired Paul.

"Mr. Buckingham's attitude was a disappointment to me," replied Mr. Archer. "I tried to make him see what I had come to see under your proddings, Jerry, in the last few days, but he couldn't or wouldn't. Instead he tried to show me that we ought to condone any situation such as at present obtains in the city; that the worst evil to be feared was agitation, because it made the people dissatisfied, filled them with false ideas, and would lead to insane radicalism that must unsettle property values, be bad for vested interests, and thus work hardship on the poor, for in the last analysis rich and poor alike are dependent upon property."

"But that argument is utterly fallacious," insisted Jerry.

"So I endeavoured to show him," responded Mr. Archer, "but without success. That's what makes me feel so grave now. Boys, we can barely stop to rejoice



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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over our success. We have to initiate something wider and more thoroughgoing.

"Not as manufacturers, but as citizens, we have to inaugurate a movement to secure an equitable government in Philadelphia, to banish the system of oppression and cruelty that exists under our present government, or the very thing Mr. Buckingham fears will come to pass."

"Father! that's exactly what I've been seeing," declared Jerry, excitedly. But further participation in the discussion on the young man's part was blocked by the announcement of a caller waiting in his office. As Jerry turned away from his father's desk, the question—"Just why did we win?" recurred again to his practical mind. As a matter of fact, it was the answer to this question which waited beside his own desk, in the form of a short, queer little man, with face and hair much redder than Jerry's own, eyes that were bluer, and a smile grotesquely wide.

"Sullivan's my name," said the little man, "Danny Sullivan, leader of the fourteenth division, Forty-ninth Ward. I just dropped in to tell you, Mr. Archer, good afternoon."

"Yes," remarked Jerry, scrutinizing his caller carefully, "the papers announced that it would go through. But, tell me, Mr. Sullivan, just what is your interest in the matter?"

"Why," explained Danny, quite composed, "I told 'em to do it. This is my division right over here," Danny jerked a thumb out the window, "and my people are interested, just the same as yours."

"Oh, I see," conceded the young manufacturer, and was instantly alert for a new lesson in politics. "Would you mind telling me just how the thing worked out—as you see it? Have a cigar!"

"Thanks! Sure!" and Danny Sullivan, puffing contentedly, described with humorous unction and some pictorial skill the rumblings of revolt in the wards which at length had issued in victory for the Archer

Danny Sullivan, leader of "the Fourteenth," wrung Jerry's hand and departed.

"What am I after?" murmured the young manufacturer. "They all seem to take it for granted that I am after something, or I wouldn't be doing this. I'm after my own self-respect, that's what I'm after." And Jerry picked up a paperweight and clapped it down sharply upon his desk by way of emphasis.

But Danny Sullivan was not the only caller who invaded the last hours of Jerry's day at the factory. Councilmen Beverly, Hart, and Callaway came also and each strove modestly to convey the impression that it was due to his own keen political sagacity that the franchise committee had been persuaded to act. Each, too, was made to feel very much at ease by Jerry and presently was expressing lively anticipations of cementing personal acquaintance into political friendship.

Last of all, Fritz Schaff himself came in, and introduced himself, with a salvey smile, as the ward leader. That he was also a member of Select Council seemed a secondary consideration.

"Mr. Archer, why you didn't come to me in the first place?" he inquired in tones of mild reproach; but Jerry had swiftly discerned a difference between Schaff and his other callers.

"Because it wouldn't have done any good," he answered, sharply. "Because I had to make you see, Schaff, that it was to your interest to help me before you would do so. Isn't that the fact?"

"Vell, it might be so," admitted the ward leader, bland and unresentful.

"It is so, Schaff, and don't think I don't know it."

"Ve could be friends from now on," argued Schaff, with another of his salvey smiles.

But Jerry appeared to hold this proposal in suspense. "Somebody burned down our sign," he said, fixing the man with an accusing eye. Schaff wriggled uncomfortably, but laughed.

"I guess you can be much obliged to whoever helped you along that much. It was a damfool procedure."

"It was a criminal procedure," said Jerry, sternly, "and the man who did it is where I can get him whenever I want to." The ward leader paled in spite of himself. "However, Schaff, no hard feelings. The skirmish is over and we won, so we can afford to be magnanimous. Good day! Thank you for coming. Always glad to see you, you know."

The ward leader went out, smiling and affable to the last, but ill at ease and puzzling his thick head. He had entered with brazen assurance in his heart, he was going away disturbed and with a wholesome fear of the man he had come in to patronize.

Paul, who had marked the procession of Jerry's callers curiously, dropped down on the corner of his brother's desk before going home. "It was the power of the press that did it," he gloated.

"No," demurred Jerry, primed with more exact information. "It was the power of enlightened self-interest—the butcher, the baker, the boarding-house keeper—the obvious self-interest of the voting elements in these wards around us—the one power that Rand and his masters dared not oppose."

"Who were these fellows?" inquired Paul.

"Councilmen, division workers, the ward leader himself," chuckled Jerry. "I've had a great lesson, Paul. Listen to this!" He called his stenographer and began to dictate:

"Good citizenship is selfishness—enlightened selfishness. Government is designed to promote the self-interest of the largest number. The test of a good mayor, of a good councilman, of a good official of any sort, is that he administers his office to advance the self-interest of the largest number."

"There," Jerry concluded, turning again to Paul. "That's my platform. When I run for office, that's what I run on."

Paul regarded his brother quizzically for a moment.

"You're not thinking of running, are you?"

"No," said Jerry, shortly. "That was a joke. But everybody keeps asking me what I'm after, and so I adopted the hypothesis for a minute. No—but there's what I've learned in our first raid on the enemy trenches. Self-interest makes majorities."

Paul and his father went home; stenographers and clerks and workmen went home, but not Jerry. He lingered, according to his habit, to be alone and to think. For one thing he was waiting till Ruth should be home from the Trench Comforts Bazaar, in order that he might ring her up and whisper the glad news of victory. For another, there lay upon his desk a fresh installment of that flood of letters from parties unknown, which came quite regularly now, voicing complaints, detailing injustices, expressing hopes, or offering suggestions for bettering political conditions in the city. Jerry digested these carefully, and finally turned from the heap of them to a letter of a single sheet that had lain carefully weighted down to his desk all afternoon. The writing on the sheet was done in lead pencil, the hand was cramped, and the communication unsigned, like many of the others, but its authorship was not upon that account in doubt to Jerry, for it gave the address of Sylvy Aurentsky.

"I have neglected these people too long already," the young manufacturer decided, contemplating the letter with a sigh as he took up the telephone receiver to learn that Ruth had not come in yet.

"Please tell her I called, Hoskins," he said to the butler, "and I will ring up later in the evening."

"Very well, sir," echoed the voice of pompous servility.

CHAPTER XVII

THOSE AURENTSKYS

IT WILL not surprise the reader much to hear that Michael Kelly had frankly avoided looking for the Aurentskys. Politically astute as Michael was, he had for the time being cannily washed his hands of the affairs of Jeremiah Thomas Archer; but about 12 o'clock of this particular day one of those grapevine rumours that travel with astonishing rapidity through the purlieus of a great city reached the ear of Kelly and informed him that the Archers were to get their franchise.

To Kelly this meant an instant change in the light through which that young man was hereafter to be viewed. True to its nature, the machine, having failed to crush young Archer, would seek to placate or compound alliance with him. Therefore friendship with Jeremiah ceased abruptly to be a liability and became an asset. Therefore Michael took a walk down South Street, asked a question or two, wrote the letter to Mr. Archer, affixed a special delivery stamp thereto, and himself deposited it in the central postoffice before 1 o'clock. Shortly after 2 it was on Jerry's desk, and the young man knew as he glanced at it that he could have located the Aurentskys himself in half an hour had that half-hour been his so to invest; but the pressure of events had been too strong for his benevolent intentions.

As a matter of fact, the Aurentskys, in moving, had merely dragged their belongings down the street to a certain alley and upstairs to the third floor of a disconsolate wreck that once had been a huge fashionable

home built on the rear of a large lot; but in these days it fronted on an alley, and from being remodelled once into a three-family house had been again remodelled and again till to-day it was a tenement of ever-descending scale. Now five families swarmed on each floor, though there were toilet facilities for but one and the water pressure was so low that much of the time it did not rise to the third floor, on which the Aurentsky family was installed. In consequence, water for all purposes had most of the time to be carried up from the floor below and left standing in buckets till wanted.

The day after this reestablishment of his home, Jacob Aurentsky, with a small stock of fruit and vegetables on a push-cart, took his stand at the curb to fight with the flies, with dirt and with chance, for such a living as luck and his solicitations might bring. That day, too, Sylvy Aurentsky surrendered a bright and beautiful dream. She came home from high school with her books and sat herself in the remotest of the two rooms possessed by the family—sat by herself and looked out of a garret window, depressed and discouraged. She was depressed because youth could hardly help being depressed at the calamity which had come upon the family, and discouraged by that part of the blow which had fallen upon her personally.

Besides, her heart was full of bitterness, because she knew that by some sharp practice her father had been robbed by the very officers of the law that were supposed to protect him; nor could the girl doubt that she was the innocent cause. In spite of her own good conscience, this knowledge occasioned a dismal feeling of self-reproach which thickened her atmosphere of gloom.

The next day Sylvy went to work as a packer in a cigarette factory. The hours were long and the wages none too generous, but she stood the work uncomplainingly and turned in her earnings at the end of the week to the family exchequer.

It was needed, too, for the push-cart trade of Jacob

Aurensky did not thrive. In fact, something was wrong with Jacob. He was morose and irritable with customers, and inclined to close up his curb-store emporium early and sit brooding in a corner of his kitchen. These moods were taken advantage of by Simon Levene.

Simon called himself an internationalist, and was a soapbox orator of the intermittent variety who had boarded with the Aurenskys in their prosperous days, and came now every night to see them.

"It's all a farce, this government," he used to begin his evening talk, for talk was the breath of life to Levene. "It's a government for the rich—for the capitalist."

In times past the vigorous opposition of Jacob Aurensky had always been provoked by such statements.

"Dis country, she is all right, und der laws is all right, Levene," he would argue stoutly. "Vonce in a while de peoples go to schleep, und some bummers and loafers dey get into chobs, but dot is our fault—ve should vote right not?"

But Levene was very intelligent and very voluble. "Once in a while," he would iterate scornfully. "Why, just to look at these ward heelers, and crooks and bums! They run the divisions and the magistrates and everything. They are criminals. They ought to be in jail. Instead they can put honest men in jail and rob them. Who keeps them? The machine. Why does it keep them? Because they deliver majorities—majorities that maintain the established order."

Ten days of these alternate broodings and goadings had been quite sufficient to put the first of these wild meditations upon vengeance in the mind of the Russian Jew, and it was upon the evening of this tenth day that Jeremiah Archer, guided by Kelly and holding his nose at the stench in the alley, made his way to the Aurensky's flat, and was received to the extent of having the door held open guardedly before his face. The time was about 7 o'clock, Jerry having consumed nearly

an hour in a search for Kelly. Over the head of the half-grown girl who had opened the door the young man discerned two men seated and arguing before a table which still held some unwashed dishes of the evening meal.

Jerry introduced himself to the child, and through the child to the whole household in his most cordial and ingratiating manner. Levene recognized the name instantly.

"Rich scum!" he said in Yiddish, with an emphasis of scorn and hatred which in Aurentsky's present need made it impossible that any advance of Jerry's should win the slightest response.

Unaware of this, but still finding himself held at bay in the door, Jerry went on talking over the head of the child to the two men, one of whom he knew must be Aurentsky, and to whoever else might be listening out of sight. As tactfully and sympathetically as possible he revealed his knowledge of the wrong which had been done to Aurentsky and advanced his proposal to punish the perpetrator and force restitution.

"Restitution!" By the utterance of that word Aurentsky identified himself as the taller and thinner of the two men. For a moment his sombre eyes lighted as if they had not yet forgotten hope, but in a moment the light had changed to one of resentment at a stranger's intrusion.

"What you want?" he demanded. "Why you should come here?"

"Why, to help you," professed Jerry frankly.

Aurentsky shook his head with a canny, mirthless smile.

"That's the way of 'em," whispered Kelly into Jerry's ear from behind. "They're Orientals, I tell you. They can't get the idea that you would take any interest in 'em except you was tryin' to get something out of them, for yourself."

"If you will go and see my lawyer, Mr. Rollinson, and tell him the story——"

"Rollinson, an attorney for the rich!" interjected Levene again in Yiddish.

"I will take you in my own car and there will be nothing to fear. No one can suspect where you have gone and I will bring you back quickly."

"What do you want?" was exclaimed fiercely, and again the dark eyes of Aurenstsky tried to read the face of Jerry. "No! It is a trap!" he decided. "You want to get me away. Then you take my daughter! Aha, I know," and he tilted his head far back with a crafty expression in the eyes, "You want my daughter."

"Yes," said Jerry frankly, "I would like to take your daughter. I know a very beautiful young woman who is greatly interested in her; she would give her a home; send her to school—do everything for her."

"Aha-a-a! It is a trap!" declared Aurenstsky in that wild high voice of his with the nasty rattle in the throat. "You hear that, Sylvy! The fine gentleman you told me about wants to take you away!"

Jerry, following the movement of Aurenstsky's eyes, was surprised to see the figure of Sylvy dimly outlined in the gloom of the doorway admitting to the next room; apparently she had been there some time.

"Yes," he said again. "Won't you come, Sylvy?"

"We Jews stick together," explained Sylvy quietly, with a shake of her head. "I couldn't just leave father and mother to their troubles, you know."

"But I didn't propose that you should abandon them, Sylvy!" Jerry interposed hastily with his most encouraging smile. "Just that—while Mr. Rollinson and I are helping your father out of his trouble, you'd let my dear friend, Miss Buckingham, who is your friend also, though you do not know it, plan a way out for you. I haven't told you about Miss Buckingham."

At the first mention of the name Aurenstsky stuttered and coughed excitedly; at the second mention of it he leaped up, eyes blazing, fists waving, uttering in harsh Yiddish a series of staccato phrases that caused Levene

instantly to seize the man and drag him back into his chair, where he shook him into muttering silence.

"Father has brooded over his wrongs," Sylvy hastened to explain, "until he is almost wild. You mustn't mind him—but"—and the girl wrung her hands rather helplessly—"it will make you see why—why I couldn't leave them now. His mind is entirely turned away from the real cause of our troubles; he is full of suspicion and hatred—against law and against the rich, who, we believe, make the law. You have mentioned the name of Buckingham, which is so big in Philadelphia, but, believe me, Mr. Archer, it is the last name father could trust. Instead, you see, it has excited him. The only men he trusts are Isenstein, who helped to rob him, and this man Levene, who every night poisons his mind a little more."

The glance of the girl and the glance of the agitator met for a moment with a flash of mutual antagonism, and then Sylvy's eyes were on her father again, sadly but tenderly, with a look of comprehension and sympathy that to Jerry was very beautiful and very moving. More than 10,000 words could have done, that look brought home to him a realization that here was a relationship springing up out of the roots of life itself which no man, no matter how well-meaning or powerful, could break in upon. Indeed, this devotion of a daughter under such circumstances seemed a thing so sacred that he would have feared to break in upon it. The father must be changed before the daughter could be changed. But how change him? Certainly not by persistence at this inopportune moment.

"Do you mean, Sylvy, that there is nothing at all we can do for you?" he asked regretfully.

"Nottin'!" snapped Aurentsky harshly, for he was calm enough now to take rational note of the young Mr. Archer's meaning.

The girl's eyes met Jerry's for a moment with a look of longing, and then she nodded resignedly but firmly. "I wouldn't turn against my father. We

Jews do not do that," she answered, lifting her head proudly.

"And yet you would like to come?" pleaded Jerry, forgetting Aurentsky's stubborn obstinacy in his concern for the girl.

"Away from this?" Sylvy looked about at the squalour of their present surroundings, at the plasterless spots on the ceiling, at the greasy, sweating paper on the walls, and shrugged her shoulders, while a strange, hard smile came to her face—a smile that it had seemed to him could never have come upon features like hers; and her manner seemed to inquire if there was anything a girl could do that she would not do to get out of surroundings like hers. For just one fleeting moment hers was a desperate, reckless look.

Abruptly it was borne in upon Jerry that poverty and hopelessness had already taken some of the sweetness out of Sylvy; that environment was submerging her.

"Forget us, Mr. Archer," she exclaimed bitterly. "We expect to be forgotten; but, oh——" and the expression of bitterness gave way to one of wistfulness.

"Isn't there— isn't there somewhere in this city of great traditions a man or men who will do something to give honest government to the poor? You rich can take care of yourselves. When the poor have right and justice taken from them—you see what happens.

"Go, now, please! Every minute that you stay here only adds to the harm which has already been done. That isn't very reasonable, I know; our treatment of you must seem barbarous, but—but not as barbarous as what we have suffered seems to us."

"I understand you, Sylvy, and I do not blame you in the least; but can't I get your father to see I am asking his coöperation in order to undo the wrong that has been done him?"

"Are wrongs ever undone?" asked Levene sharply. Jerry turned at the impudent black eyes of the agitator and frowned.

"Not by such as you," he answered, sharply.

"Go, Mr. Archer," pleaded Sylvy almost piteously; "but, oh, won't you fight to make things better in Philadelphia so that I, that my brothers and sisters, may not become like father? We come over here meaning to be such good Americans, we poor eastern Jews, and so many things happen to turn us into—that!" and she pointed dramatically to Levene, sitting coldly malevolent like a bird of evil omen, and her father, muttering and despondent.

"Very well," said Jerry, deeply moved, and putting the best face possible on an awkward situation. "I shall go, and I shall go to fight, Sylvy, for the very thing you ask for—honest government in Philadelphia; but don't expect me to forget you in the meantime; and if there is ever anything that I can do—won't you promise to call on me?"

The girl nodded, and again the wistful light was in her eyes.

Jerry lifted his hat, and backed across the threshold.

"Turned into a nut!" croaked Kelly. "Yuh can't do nothin' with 'im. He's plumb bug-house."

"But we must save the girl!" declared Jerry, though his mind was still a blank as to how. "As for Aurentsky, it's easy enough to put myself in that poor devil's place. Suppose Rand and his Big Boss shook us out of our factory, as Maldono did Aurentsky out of his store. The Jew's feelings are mild to what mine would be—only I'd be a little more intelligent and direct in going after the men who robbed me."

Such a possibility was too remote and extravagant for a man of Kelly's limited imagination to conceive of it seriously, and he received the remark in silence. The fact is that far graver things than the troubles of the Aurentskys were on the division leader's mind.

It was in front of the Lafayette Club that Jerry had thought best to leave his car, and to this point their footsteps had been directed as he and the division leader left Aurentsky's.

"Say!" remarked Kelly, as they picked their way out of the alley. "You're gettin' interested in politics, ain't you, Mr. Archer?"

"Getting? Yes, rather."

"Well, the primary election's to-morrow. After you've voted——"

"Voted!" said Jerry, looking rather surprised.

"Sure. To-morrow's the primaries."

"But I—I never pay any attention to these minor elections," explained Jerry.

"Minor?" observed Kelly with a jeer in his eye. "That's just where you highbrows lose out. You call them minor, hey? Well, it's in the minors that us fellows get the cards stacked so your votin' in the majors, as I reckon you'd call 'em, don't cut much ice, whichever way you mark the ballot, or if you don't mark it at all."

"But I shouldn't even know whom to vote for. Come to think of it, Kelly, I don't believe I'm registered."

"Well, I be blowed," said Michael Kelly, and contemplated Jerry with wonder. "And you call yourself a good citizen, eh? What right have you got to kick about the way the city's governed?" Jerry's ruddy features mantled with a deeper crimson under the division leader's withering glance.

"Not much," admitted Jerry, sham-facedly, "but I expect to do better."

Kelly, mollified, went on with: "I was just going to say that after you voted you ought to come down in this ward and see the nice, refined way the police have of carryin' an election for a friend of theirs named Deutsch. There's goin' to be rough work. They've been runnin' in extra policemen here for two or three days now."

"Extra policemen! What for?"

"Theoretically to keep the peace. Virtually to intimidate the Carey men and make votes for Deutsch."

"No!" protested Jerry in shocked disbelief.

"That's what they was doing to Rosensweig,

wasn't it? Well, they're gettin' ready to operate on a big scale to-morrow. Leave the little car where she is a while longer," proposed Kelly, "and take a walk round and let me show you."

Eager as ever to learn of actual conditions and to be instructed, Jerry accepted Kelly's invitation.

"There!" exclaimed the division leader a few minutes later. "See them two fellows over there with coats unbuttoned and the soft-collared shirts? They're policemen in disguise. The ward's full of 'em—transferred from all over the city. Some of 'em are wearin' Deutsch hats; that soft-checkered hat that fellow's got on is a Deutsch hat."

"But surely," argued Jerry, "except in cases of Rosenschweig, they can hardly be used except for keeping the peace."

"You watch 'em keepin' the peace to-morrow mornin' 'round here," grouched Kelly. "Look! here's another one—alone. Generally they hunt in couples."

"Why," exclaimed Jerry in surprise; "that's Officer

54213."
"Officer five-four-two-one-three—who's he?" demanded Kelly, quickly inquisitive.

"Just a patrolman from out near our Works," replied Jerry, having no mind to illumine Kelly more specifically as to the occasion of his acquaintance with the officer. The officer recognized Mr. Archer at about this moment.

"Looks like he'd seen a ghost," laughed Kelly. "Oh, well, Mr. Archer, you needn't mind bein' recognized. You're a public character now—they'll point you out everywhere you go for the rest of your life."

"Suppose so," admitted Jerry, rather ruefully.

"And this ain't all," declared the division leader as they concluded a tour of the ward, on every block of which, it seemed to Jerry, he had seen men loitering but whom Kelly affirmed to be policemen in plain-clothes. "This ain't all. The latest is that they've run in a bunch of gunmen from Frog Hollow in

the New York Bronx. Maldono will be handling 'em."

"Gunmen? Why, what on earth?"

"To do the work that's too nasty even for a policeman," opined Kelly dryly.

"You're prejudiced, Kelly," decided Jerry. "You're seeing things."

"Maybe," admitted the division leader, with reservations. "You're likely to get prejudiced yourself," he smiled, "if you stick around here very long."

Their tour had ended on the curb by the side of Jerry's car.

"By the way," it occurred to the young man to ask. "I'd like to use the club telephone before I leave, if I may?"

"Sure!" said Kelly. "Come in." He led the way across the pavement to the club stoop, produced a key, and swinging the door wide open, politely passed Jerry in ahead of him.

"The phone is on the landing there, at the turn of the stairs," said Kelly, pointing upward.

Following Jerry up the stairs he tendered the telephone-book.

"I know the number, thank you," said Jerry. Wires were busy, however, and the young man was detained a matter of five, perhaps ten minutes, entertained reasonably by the hum of voices, the shouts of laughter, and sight of men coming and going singly or in groups. Some of these groups stopped and formed little buzzing knots in the long hall—others filtered through double doors into the large parlour, a portion of which was visible from Jerry's position as he waited for a chance to use the phone. Some of the men looked anxious, others wore expressions of vast self-importance, and the whole atmosphere of the place was tense and vibrant with ill-subdued excitement. This more than what Jerry had seen in the ward illuminated his mind as to the desperate importance of to-morrow's struggle to the men down here who were to participate in it.

"If only our kind of people would take as much interest," he was reflecting when—getting central at last, he called his number: Rittenhouse 4281, but just then a sound of shouting, a rush of trampling feet, with pounding and clamours to be admitted, echoed from beyond the front door.

A moment later a revolver was fired outside, and a man leaped up from the lazy comfort of a huge leather chair in that wide front room, and turning, pointed excitedly to a bullet hole in the upholstery upon which a moment before his body had been lolling. Instantly there was a panic; men rushed this way and that, seeking like frightened rabbits to escape.

Now, too, the sound of splintering blows upon the door was heard punctuated by the screams of frightened women on the street. Eventually the door crashed in and a hoodlum mob streamed into the hallway shouting coarse threats and wielding blackjacks on every head they could reach. Their work once begun was businesslike and methodical. They hammered their way through the hall and into the parlours front and back, which echoed with curses, blows, moans, and shouts as the brutal work went on. But when the tide of the invaders headed up the stairs, there was Kelly standing boldly on the landing, a poised revolver in his hand.

"Don't come up!" said the division leader. There was a slight tremor in Kelly's voice, but none apparently in the hand that pointed the automatic. Men ducked away from before its frown, and nobody came up the stairs.

The wave of invaders surged out as quickly as it had swept in, and Jerry, transfixed by what was happening, and having forgotten his telephone call, followed Kelly down to the halls and on a tour of the wreck below stairs where amid the welter of overturned chairs, tables, and cuspidors, men roiled about in pain or slumped unconscious on the floor.

Something slipped disagreeably under Jerry's foot

as he crossed a threshold. It was blood! Pools of it stained the carpet, and bleeding, reeling heads had smeared the walls.

"Kin' of prejudiced by this time, ain't you, Mr. Archer?" queried Kelly dryly.

"Kind of," admitted Jerry, dazed and sickened by what he had seen. "Horrible!" he shuddered after a minute.

"It was a sergeant of police who led 'em," affirmed Kelly.

"He fired the shot through the wall and into the chair. He thought Jimmie Carey was settin' in it."

"Unbelievable!" exclaimed Jerry.

"But you do believe it, don't you?" inquired the division leader, with a searching glance as if he must doubt the sanity of any one who did not believe.

"Yes," said Jerry, "I believe it. But who—who can you appeal to?" stammered Jerry.

"That's it," snapped Kelly quickly. "That's the ideal! When the police beat you up—who can you appeal to?"

"Of course, these were not all policemen," Jerry reflected.

"But policemen led 'em, aided and abetted by our friend Maldono. Did you see him jackin' the cripple in the doorway? The rest of 'em was this choice bunch of Frog Hollow gunmen from New York."

Appalled and overwhelmed by the exhibition of lawlessness and brutality to which he had been a witness, Jerry, thinking deeply, bade Kelly good-bye, passed out of the club, made his way through the crowd which had gathered in the front of it, and entered his automobile.

And this was the day of his victory over the brazen Rond—the day he had won his franchise, and he should be wildly happy. Instead, he had never been so depressed in his life. He gave up wanting to communicate with Ruth. His sense of shock was too great and too sickening. Instead, his thoughts turned to Victor

Rollinson, and he felt an immediate impulse to unload upon his stalwart mind the burden of dismays, misgivings, and perplexities with which his reason was struggling.

Recalling Rollinson's habit of working nights, and noting that the hour now was half-past eight, he drove direct to the lawyer's on the chance of finding him there. The big fellow was in right enough and alone, hunched over a lawbook, the back of him shrouded in darkness, the viking face silhouetted by rays from the hooded shade of the electric light that flooded the page on which his eyes were bent.

"I see you whipped 'em," he said with his big smile as he reached out a glad and vigorous hand. "Why, what's the matter?"

"Won the first skirmish," admitted Jerry, dejectedly. "Matter? Victor, I have just witnessed the most revolting sight I ever saw in my life."

The expression of Jerry's face and the tremor in his voice were enough to show how the memory of some recent sight still lingered and distressed him.

"My God, man!" exclaimed Victor, standing up and laying a hand on Jerry's shoulder. "You look ill! Sit down and tell me about it."

"Not as bad as that," said Jerry, "but it's a lot more distressing to be an innocent bystander than to have a part in a healthy scrimmage yourself. That's the psychology of it, I guess, but sit down yourself and let me give you an earful of what I've just been seeing."

While Victor smoked at first slowly and then with increasing rapidity Jerry described the scenes of violence to which he had just been a witness. At its end Rollinson's pipe had gone out entirely and the lawyer sat for a moment, with eyes on the distance in that reflecting way of his, but with tightening lips and every muscle of his face seeming to harden into a mask of implacable resolution.

"Jerry," he said presently, "we've got to smash 'em!"

S-s-s-m-ash 'em!" He bit out the words the second time with tremendous emphasis and his eyes lighted with that blue viking fire which always smoldered there.

"And the first blow?" inquired Jerry.

"You've struck your first blow," said Victor. "Maldono is where I start."

"Which reminds me," Jerry responded, "I have found the Aurentsky family."

"Is that so?" Rollinson had started as if in surprise, his mood, his whole expression changed.

"Yes, and I went to see him to-night. That was what took me down there. But the man won't talk. Aided and abetted by some sort of an anarchist friend of his he's gone so dotty that we not only can't use him but can't approach him. Can't do anything for the girl even."

"Can't?"

Jerry was at some pains to describe the circumstances of the Aurentskys and the varying states of mind which Sylvy had revealed to him. Rollinson appeared to listen intently, but in an absorbed sort of way, his big, blonde warrior face wrapped in a mantle of deep thought. At length he sighed deeply.

"Her face haunts me," he said, in strange, dreamy tones of deep feeling. "Her face, her eyes, her voice, all of her!"

"Haunts you? Have you seen her?" inquired Jerry in amazement.

Rollinson drew the tobacco jar toward him, and in the pregnant silence filled his pipe slowly before replying.

"Yes," he said at length. "She sat there—in that chair—for half an hour—for an hour—I could hardly let her go. I kept looking into her eyes. I kept her talking, for the voice was music to my ears; Jerry, I let a girl sit there and melt her way into my heart, and after it was half over—after the damage was done, found out that the girl was Sylvy Aurentsky!"

The big fellow twirled out his match and threw back

his head with a forced nervous laugh. Jerry was rather breathless, and in part because Rollinson's manner conveyed more than his words. He had never known women to play any part in the big fellow's life, though he knew also that the man would have been considered a good catch by many an ambitious mother in Philadelphia. But Svlvy, the beautiful little Jewess, and this great blonde giant of a man springing up out of the soil of Germantown, with no pedigree back of him but that of the fighting Saxon blood which his whole appearance advertised?

"There's some one woman somewhere in the world for every man, I suppose," said Rollinson, almost as if apology were necessary.

"And all in an hour?" murmured Jerry, wonderingly but sympathetically, while he watched the expression of tenderness grow in his friend's eyes.

"Not more than that. I got my head after a while and sent her away."

"But did you tell her?"

"Tell her? Do you think I am clean crazy? I hadn't told myself yet. I just felt something that I suppose it's in every man to feel—many times perhaps—only I'd never felt it yet. And after a while I said to myself that's what it is. Just my kind of luck, you know, Archer. I've always been a lonely devil, and here she comes for a minute, and there she goes." Rollinson's face was turned toward the door with a bereft expression, as if some beautiful vision had just passed outside.

"But I don't understand why she came," said Jerry. "Or what instinct led her to you. It was about her father's case, of course."

"No—merest accident in the world and yet perfectly natural," said Victor. "The United Tobacco Company, you know, or maybe you don't, is a client of mine. There was an elevator accident out there the other morning, with prospects for a healthy damage suit. 'Send all the witnesses in to me at once,' I di-

rected, 'so we can hear their stories while memories are fresh.' Among them comes this girl. It was her face that got me first and her quality. She wasn't frayed or stolid or bold like the others. Nothing, it seems to me, could ever make her cheap or common. You know how it is about a face! Well, there was just something in her face that threw the hooks into me.

"When she smiled I thought God had turned on another sun from somewhere up in the wings. Then she spoke. You know, her voice isn't exactly what you'd call clear. It's got a kind of a husk in it, kind of a low, velvety burr. Well, it seemed as if that was just the one particular sound my ear was created to hear and never had heard.

"I forgot what she'd come for at first, and then I forgot to ask what her name was. The stenographer did that after I'd got her story, which, of course, didn't take ten minutes. Then I sent the stenographer out and I kept her there and kept her talking, just about anything; and with her looking at me kind of surprised and timid and wondering. And after a while I woke up and let her go."

"How long ago was this?"

"That was ten days ago. The accident happened about the second morning she went to work, I believe; and every hour of the day since I've seen her sitting there in that chair. Got 'em, haven't I, old man?" said Rollinson with a shrug of his mighty shoulders.

"It's a strange coincidence," remarked Jerry soberly. "I don't know anything that could have happened better. Now you'll find a way to do something for her. I couldn't think of any."

Jerry had risen and came over to stand impressively before his friend Victor. "I pretend to be some judge of the other sex, Victor," he smiled, "and if ever there was a large treasure done up in a small, fine package, it's Sylvy Aurentsky."

Victor smiled and actually blushed.

"And she's in danger right now," declared Jerry.

"From what?" said Victor, the smile gone and his eyes narrowing and hard.

"From herself," said Jerry.

"I thought it couldn't be Maldono."

"But we've got to find a way to protect her from Maldono, though, and with this attitude on the part of her father——"

"Oh, I've got Maldono!" exclaimed Rollinson with assurance. "You were too slow. I began to reach for him within five minutes after the girl left the office."

"The District Attorney made you a special prosecutor?"

"Sure! I told him all about the fellow, and the District Attorney is really all right, you know. He doesn't charge any windmills, but he was with me heart and soul in a fight on the rascal. He sent a man out to dig up some of those old cases to see if there wasn't one we could get the witnesses together on and put up to the Grand Jury; but while we were digging Maldono obligingly made a fresh case for us by swindling an old farmer from over in Jersey on a fake pool-room bet on a race that never was run. The farmer protested, and Maldono hit him, hit him so hard the old fellow's hanging between life and death. We got an ante-mortem statement and a bunch of evidence he can't wiggle away from. He's in jail and no chance of getting bail till it's determined whether the old man lives or dies. If he dies it's the chair for Maldono."

"Why, I saw Maldono in the Fifth Ward to-night."

"Impossible!" said Rollinson.

"I tell you I did. I could not be mistaken in the man. Mike Kelly saw him, too, and intimated that to-morrow being primary day, Maldono was expected to be very active."

Rollinson was already reaching for the telephone.

"Well, I'll be shot at sunrise!" he exclaimed, after a brief conversation with the jail. "What do you think of that? Bailed! Rottenest I've ever known a judge to do in Philadelphia!"

The attorney sat for a moment with down-cast eyes, thinking. This fresh evidence of a complaisance that was criminal on the part of officials of the city and county of Philadelphia brought from Jerry another reference to the assault on the Lafayette Club, led by a sergeant of police.

"There'll be murder down there to-morrow," prophesied Rollinson. "I've warned the Mayor what he might expect from permitting the police to be used in this fashion. There'll be murder down there to-morrow as sure as to-morrow comes."

"And Maldono, no doubt, will be in it," suggested Jerry.

"Maldono? Not on your life. I'll have him in jail before midnight, if I have to take him there myself."

"And Sylvy?"

"Ah, Sylvyl" exclaimed Rollinson, and passing his hand across his brow, he stood for a moment with divided mind.

When Jerry went out it seemed to him that he might cease to concern himself about Jacob Aurenstsky as an individual, and that Sylvy's future might safely be entrusted to the devoted watchfulness of Victor Rollinson.

CHAPTER XVIII

GOVERNMENT BY MURDER

ONCE away from Victor, and with his mind somewhat unburdened of its shock, Jerry's thoughts flew back to Ruth; but when he tried to telephone her learned that she had come in and gone out again for the evening. When he reached home, however, a message from her awaited him. "So glad you won the franchise," it said. "What next?"

"Wasn't that like the girl!" his heart exclaimed. A challenge to go on, though, as Ruth confessed she herself could not see the way. And the franchise! Oh, yes; that was, after all, the big event of this day. Jerry stood staring blankly, while he tried to orientate his mind.

The interview with the Aurentskys, the sight of the disguised policemen in the wards, and of the assault upon the Lafayette Club, these and the very astonishing discovery that Victor Rollinson was in love with Sylvie, had intervened and made the triumph in the matter of the franchise seem far away. They made him feel that strange currents were drawing him, that invisible forces were slowly involving him in a sort of whirlpool of drama, romantic and tragic, personal and political, and threatening to make of him something other than he would naturally be.

But the young man was not permitted to give himself up now either to reflection or to speculation, for there were other messages awaiting his perusal, and a constant series of telephone calls succeeded his arrival—from friends, from mere acquaintances, and from men whom he had never talked with before, but who

were officers or members of the various civic organizations that in one forlorn hope or another had battled for years for better governmental conditions in the city. All these messages and calls were congratulatory in character, all confessed admiration for the vigour and initiative which Jerry had displayed, and numbers of them expressed a hope that this was but the beginning of a campaign against contractor-government in Philadelphia, in which the vitality and magnetism of a new personality might show the way to wider results than had yet been achieved.

"Nothing succeeds like success!" Paul cackled from time to time during the evening. Henry T. Archer also was elated and proud of the distinction which appeared to be flowing in upon his younger son almost before he could understand why it should come.

"There's a good deal of froth about all this," he warned.

"Right-o," declared Paul. "Most of these people wouldn't have had even a prayer for you if you had lost. But it's the duty of a fighter to win, and you won, Jerry, old man!" For the twentieth time he clapped his brother upon the back.

Jerry, however, received all his messages gravely and modestly, and in every moment of quiet that was permitted him, relapsed into thoughtful silence. He was still depressed and wondering over what he had seen and heard that night, both at the Aurentsky's and in the club. The memory of one sight in particular, that of a small frightened man, with gray in his hair, felled by a policeman's wanton blackjack, was especially disgusting. It made his flesh creep.

When the family jubilation had been brought to an end by the retirement of Mrs. Archer and Constance, Jerry seized the occasion to describe to his father and brother these scenes which kept flowing before his mind.

"And Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell are in the Fifth Ward," Henry T. Archer commented grimly.

"They are for a fact!" recalled Paul, with surprise and chagrin.

"There's a crack in the Liberty Bell you remember," suggested Jerry.

With no further remark, but only a significant exchange of glances, the three men separated. But though Jerry went to bed immediately, he did not sleep much.

"There'll be murder in that ward to-morrow," Victor Rollinson had declared in that convincing way of his, and somehow this gloomy prediction not only troubled Jerry's waking moments, but troubled his sleep when at last he came to sleep.

Six o'clock found him dressed and getting his car out of the garage. Ten minutes before the polls opened he encountered Kelly in front of the Lafayette Club.

"Meet Mr. Rissman," said Kelly, introducing Max, of the *Evening Courant*. "I'll be pretty busy, but he'll show you round."

Rissman was a dapper, handsome chap with dark eyes and an engaging smile.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Archer," said the reporter, not thinking it necessary to acquaint the young manufacturer with the part he had played in giving the Strongburger story to a waiting world.

"Thanks! I shall be very grateful for your guidance," said Jerry, shaking hands with pleasant anticipations. These were kindled in part by the attractiveness of Rissman's personality and in part by the young manufacturer's favourable impression of reporters gained from his recent experience with them.

Together they strode off round the ward. The principal difference from the night before, as Jerry noted it now, was the increased presence of uniformed policemen. A pair of them appeared on every corner, while the proximity of a voting place was always advertised by the sight of a squad of three or four men in uniform obviously on guard and ostensibly keeping a reasonable distance from the polling place.

"There! There's Deutsch," exclaimed Rissman, "the man on the back seat. Those are some of his henchmen in the automobile with him—and some of these disguised policemen, too."

"Riding round with the candidate?"

"Theoretically a bodyguard," smiled Rissman. "Deutsch and Carey are rival candidates for the nomination for Select Councilman. The election carries with it the ward leadership, and that's what the fight's all about. You'll see an attack on the election boards down here this morning. These election boards were all named by powers above who were favourable to Carey, who has been the leader here for years; but since that the Mayor has turned in for Deutsch and put the police in on his side. You'll see the police trying to get these election boards."

As the reporter finished speaking they came on confusion and clamour about a polling place; there was loud talk within the dark hole of an empty storeroom where the voting was in progress, and much crowding about the doors.

"Excuse me," said Rissman, leaving Jerry posted on the curb while he elbowed his way into the jam. Presently he emerged with one of his knowing smiles.

"What did I tell you?" he exclaimed. "They've arrested every one of these election officers on trumped-up charges!"

Just then the patrol wagon arrived with its usual noisy clangour and the arrested officials were meekly herded into it.

"But here, what are those fellows doing?" and Jerry pointed to a knot of men on the sidewalk apparently conducting some kind of a game of Simon says thumbs down.

"That's the Deutsch men holding a curbstone election to name officers to take charge of the polls here. Before those other fellows can get bail and get back here, the Deutsch people will be in charge of the ballot-box."

"Well, I'm dashed!" said Jerry. Although becoming inured to shocks and disillusionments of this sort, he gazed with a kind of sickness in his heart and indignant curiosity on his face. As the curbstome proceedings concluded, a group of nondescripts stepped inside and proceeded to take over the paraphernalia of election from the policeman who was guarding it.

"Let's go round to the station," suggested Rissman, "and see what's happening there."

The police station was crowded with these same nondescript types from the ward, and every few minutes the patrol wagon dumped a fresh load.

"Same thing," explained Rissman, after a scout around. "The Deutsch men have got a bale of blank affidavits provided by some complaisant magistrate. They're filling in any sort of old charges from assault and battery on the Kaiser to eloping with the scrub ladies at the City Hall, and they're around pulling these Carey election officials as fast as they can work and putting Deutsch men in, the way they were over in that other division."

"But—but can nothing be done?" inquired Jerry, still prompted by no special sympathy for the Carey men, but concerned only for the sacredness of the ballot. "Why, this is equivalent to stealing the election!"

"Stealing it? Of course. That's the idea. Carey's here bailing his men out as fast as he can, but the harm's done at the booths by now and there's so many of these camouflaged policemen around that are sure to get into every fight and to happen always to be on the Deutsch side of it, that the Careyites will be pretty conservative about trying to regain their positions at the polling places. Besides, there's that rumour about gunmen."

"Carey! Is Carey here? I'd like to get a look at him."

"I'll introduce you!" proposed Rissman, and biding his chance, dragged Jerry into the crowd before the rail and presented him to a heavy man who wore a derby

hat pushed back and whose big face carried a primary expression of placidity and babylike innocence that was just now illumined by a gleam of excitement in the eyes. The impression conveyed by the Carey ensemble was that of a patient, adhesive sort of personality rather than a forceful one.

The leader bestowed only a casual handshake and nod on Jerry, his mind too engrossed to recognize in him the Archer of recent newspaper fame, and turned again to his task as, with J. I. Devan, the bailgoer, inside at the desk of the Magistrate—a Carey magistrate—bail bond after bail bond was being executed and accepted. There were others in the Carey party, but Jerry did not meet them, content to stand aloof in the steaming crowd and absorb impressions, while Rissman gathered the news, which in this instance consisted mainly of the names of the arrested parties.

"The telephone for me," Rissman announced presently. "Want to come outside and get some air?"

While the reporter went into a drug store to telephone his rewrite man at the *Courant* office Jerry waited on the curb, his eyes staring about him curiously and his mind full of bitterness as he realized that he was witnessing a breakdown of republican government at its very source. He recalled some polished sentences in a speech of Woodrow Wilson's describing the adoption of the Virginia bill of rights, when from cabin and mansion the colony from the humbled frontiersmen and the most dignified planter had marched out to register in peace, dignity, and order the will of the sovereign citizens of a sovereign State; he thought of that, and then he thought of this that he was witnessing.

"Why, it's no more than a feud between two mobs," he decided, and just then his attention was attracted by the behaviour of three or four young men of the hoodlum type. These men came out of an alley, hurried diagonally across Sixth Street, paused with furtive looks about them, then dove into the door of a rickety ram-

shackle house a few yards back from the corner of De Lancey Street.

It struck Jerry that the demeanour of these young men had been peculiar, and that, before entering the house, they had been signalled to by a man on the corner. The man turned and Jerry recognized Maldono.

"Rollinson didn't get Maldono after all," was Jerry's first thought, while before his eyes was reeled off the picture of more young men hurrying out of the alley, some in groups and some singly, but all taking their trail diagonally across the street in the same furtive way and disappearing in the doorway of the same ramshackle house.

"Kind of queer, this," remarked Jerry, as Rissman came out. "That house up there has just filled up with a bunch of toughs that look like mischief. Does some Carey supporter live there?"

Having in mind what he had seen last night, Jerry could easily imagine another bloody raid in progress.

"Don't know," confessed Rissman. "Yonder comes Carey now and Assistant District Attorney Maurer is with him."

The two men passed the house in which the supposed gangsters had disappeared and rounded the corner of De Lancey Street.

"Let's follow 'em," said Rissman. "They're going to the polls there. Might be something doing."

They started at a pace rather faster than dignified, but the two men were already cut off from view by the projecting wall of the playground before a public school building situated on that corner.

"For the love of Mike, look!" whispered Rissman excitedly as they passed the obstructing wall. The gang whose movements had aroused Jerry's curiosity were again in sight. Pouring out of a blind alley opening from the rear of the house into which they had entered, they surrounded Carey and Maurer on the De Lancey Street sidewalk and fell to beating them with blackjacks. Both men lurched and dodged this way

and that, with faces averted and heads ducking behind their uplifted arms, but presently went down under a rain of blows. On the ground the beating still continued, until some of the men, as if arms had wearied, began to kick the prostrate victims instead.

Jerry plunged forward instinctively, but Rissman clung to his arm.

"Keep out of it, Mr. Archer," he warned. "The odds are too great."

"That's my kind of a fight," insisted Jerry, dragging Rissman after him like a ball and chain as he struggled across the street.

Meantime kaleidoscopic changes were taking place before their eyes. Time appeared to stand still. Events of the fractional part of a second seemed to be deliberately accomplished and to drag themselves out to lengths that were painful. Carey, beaten for a while, arched his huge back and staggered to his feet, where he groped blindly to the side of a building and leaned against it, with blood streaming from his head. Maurer, too, was up.

The assaulting party, as if frightened by the sight of its own bloody work, had desisted and began to scatter widely over the pavement and on to the cobbles, looking this way and that uncertainly and seemed prepared to bolt. Meanwhile a group of plain-clothes men or disguised policemen, as Kelly had called them, came running down the other side of De Lancey Street.

"Now that it's over," said Rissman sarcastically, for Jerry, seeing the men no longer being beaten, had come to a stop and was watching the drama—"now that it's over, the police'll come up and make a play at arresting these fellows. But they'll all make their getaway. Watch 'em scouting now."

But one officer, more zealous than the others, had dashed in among the scuttling gangsters, seized one of them, and struggled to handcuff him. In the scuffle the prisoner was felled to the pavement and another gangster, seeing this, whipped out a revolver, fired

two shots at the officer, then turned the corner and ran north on Sixth Street. At the same time an advancing man far across on the other side of the street stopped running, leaned for a moment against the wall of the school building, and then sank slowly to the pavement.

Cries and shouts resounded up and down the little street.

"Murder! Murder! Murder!" bleated a negress excitedly.

Jerry by this time was at the side of the man who had felled the gangster.

"Why, it's Officer 54213!" he exclaimed.

"For God's sake, Mr. Archer! Did you see that?" gasped Officer 54213, still clinging to his prisoner, but pale and excited. "That fellow shot point-blank at me twice. I just stooped down to grab this fellow and the bullets went right over me."

"One of 'em got Eppley," said another plain-clothes man coming up.

"No?" And Officer 54213, paler still and trembling more, turned and gazed across the street with an awed expression on his face to where Eppley lay now in the arms of a uniformed officer.

"Get that fellow, Bill! He shot me!" Eppley was saying as he died.

But already two uniformed policemen, of whom the district was so full, had grabbed the flying gunman as he ran into their arms and marched him, sullen, frightened, and excited, to the station.

Carey still lurched against the side of the building, one hand supporting his body, the other pressed to his head. When taken away for a moment it was covered with blood, and he stared at it stupidly.

One of the valiant group of uniformed policemen who had permitted fifteen or twenty gangsters to swing their blackjacks at will for several minutes on the street and allowed all but two of them to escape, now asserted his valour by arresting the helpless Carey.

Confusion, meantime, was multiplying. The place was alive with policemen, camouflaged and otherwise. Patrol wagons and ambulances clanged and fought their way in among the gathering crowd, while the coloured woman's excited clamourings still punctuated the atmosphere. The police, however, were not by this untoward accident to be diverted from the prime duty of the hour, for up the block a hundred yards a group of them were arresting the election officers, who in this division were all negroes, for carrying concealed weapons.

Jerry followed the patrol wagon to the police station. He saw the two gunmen searched and booked; he witnessed the dramatic discovery of the small white ribbons tied in the second buttonhole of each vest—ribbons that were to be a sign to the police that these were friendly to the murderers, and, as it were, allies in disguise whose bloody harvest was not to be disturbed.

Later the young man talked to the blood-soaked Carey as he sat in the office of Magistrate Harrigan, with his head swathed in bandages more mountainous than Jerry himself had worn.

More than any sight of blood or bandages, the glaze upon his eye told how seriously the man was wounded, but with the instinct of the fighter he refused to leave the field. Stolidly and stubbornly, with manifestation of that adhesive quality which is characteristic of the man, he clung to the armchair and sat amid his henchmen, receiving reports, issuing orders, and planning what advantage was to be taken of this grave strategical error on the part of his enemies.

From the window as he looked out Jerry saw squads of additional policemen—mounted men this time—moving into the Fifth Ward, to patrol the streets and preserve order, while the work of conducting an election went steadily forward.

"Am I in Mexico watching an election under Porfirio Diaz?" Jerry asked himself as he stepped out of

Magistrate Harrigan's office. But right in front of him was Independence Square, so he knew that he was not in Mexico but in the city of Philadelphia. He entered the square and moved diagonally across it to the spot where the Declaration of Independence was first read to the world; then he shifted his gaze to the outside of that beloved building in which the Declaration had been drafted. To realize the possibilities of the situation to the full he stepped inside and looked at the table on which the sacred document had lain, and at the inkwells from which the fluid had been dipped to sign it.

"They ought to let Jimmie Carey and Ike Deutsch come in and write their names on it, too," he remarked cynically, and then turned to pause a moment beside the ancient oak mountings of the Liberty Bell. As he gazed at that venerable relic, so dear to the hearts of those to whom the symbols of American liberty are still a thing to reverence, tears came into his eyes.

"Yes," he confessed, after a considerable interval, "*There is a crack in the bell.*"

CHAPTER XIX

THE CITY ROUSES

MISGOVERNMENT had reached its logical climax in murder.

The city seemed stirred to its foundations. The newspapers thundered. The people murmured and packed the Academy of Music and the streets leading thereto in a vast outpouring of public protest.

Events followed each other swiftly. The rest of the gunmen were trailed to New York and captured, Maloney and Clark, as go-betweens, were apprehended. The Mayor, a police lieutenant, a ward leader, and a policeman and others were indicted. Day by day in the courts was uncovered one mesh after another in what seemed to many to be an ugly net of conspiracy to steal a city from its citizens at the polls.

Men met in clubs and churches and on the streets and shook their heads and asked each other if things had not gone far enough. The Town Meeting party was formed over night and its candidates chosen to oppose the candidates of the insolent and unrepentant contractors' machine at the November election.

Into the fight against government by murder came trooping all the various elements that had fought for reform in time past. Into it, too, came the forces of Senator Penrose and his ally, State Senator McNichol, tetrarch of a third part of the wards of Philadelphia. Into it, too, came every man that had a grievance or a grouch against the Mayor or the dominant political forces in the city. It was a motley army, avid, athirst, bitter! Political sagacity, practical experience, streams of money, a vast tide of public sentiment were behind the movement.

Jeremiah Thomas Archer found himself drawn into the swirl of these events and recognized as a person of consequence in the rallying mass. He enjoyed the situation as any young enthusiast might, and gave himself up to the onrushing current. He worked unstintedly; he helped raise money; he helped perfect organization, and when they wanted to read his name off as a vice-president at meetings, alleging it was an asset to the movement, he was willing, not through complaisance and vanity, but because he meant to give up what he had.

When the people at such meetings demanded to see him he stood up and was introduced. When they called for a speech he remained on his feet and talked. Terse, straightforward sentences blurted right out of the heart of him. To his surprise, the conclusion of the first speech was accompanied by vociferous applause.

"You're a vote-getter, Mr. Archer," said the chairman of the speakers' committee. "We shall have to use you on the stump."

So Jerry went on with those straight-arm jabbing talks, growing more and more effective and receiving louder and louder manifestations of approval until, as each night something came back to him from the audience, his own natural modesty was overcome to the extent of compelling him to recognize that he was growing into a real force in the campaign and like a generous horse responds to encouraging words, he threw himself into the collar. The idea that victory did not wait at the end of the campaign—the idea that the people of Philadelphia were not about to reassert their right to control the reins of government never once suggested itself to him.

This faith in the success of the Town Meeting party was fostered in the minds of the leaders by the strategic blunders of the opposition. The most astounding of these was committed when, after all the tragedy which had attended the employment of the police in

the Fifth Ward primaries and the public furore of protest against it, the police were now sent out in shoals to investigate the signatures to the petitions by which the Town Meeting party candidates had been placed upon the election ballots.

This gratuitous duty was performed by some of the patrolmen with particular arrogance. They broke in upon the domestic life of citizens at arbitrary and unseasonable hours. They took advantage of the absence from home of the signers of the petition to intimidate wives, in some cases frightening them almost into hysteria and working permanent injury to health, all in a brutal endeavour to frighten the citizens into disavowing their free acts.

Such practices savored more of the political activities of the Borgias than of any American institution and were calculated to create a revolt. It did not occur to Jerry that the citizenship could be too sodden, too spiritless to respond, or that there was some unsuspected element in the situation which drugged the nerves and made response impossible, and it was only on the night before election that the young campaigner got an intimation of this to him unconsidered element.

He had been speaking at a series of street-corner meetings in Kensington, which, Philadelphians proudly boast, is the greatest centre of the textile industry in the world. Its population is primarily English, Scotch, and Irish, now in the second and third generation of American residence and but little tinctured with other European blood. Presumably it should have been the easiest industrial population in Philadelphia in which to make appeal to those rugged qualities on which democracy is built.

But Jerry was struck by the unresponsiveness of these audiences. At first he attributed it to the greater reserve of the British nature; but this solution grew more and more unsatisfactory. At the end of the last meeting he slipped away from his associates in the automobile and worked into the dispersing crowd, listening

to their comments and studying at close range the expressions upon their faces.

In the midst of this occupation Jerry felt himself discerned and spied upon by a pair of bland, twinkly eyes that belonged to a rigid and bony face, the topography of which loudly advertised the breed which begot it. The man was about sixty years of age, but standing vigorous and serene, sucking contentedly at a pipe which sprouted from under a grizzled moustache and sagged over a chin that was prominent and cleanly shaven.

"What did you think of the meeting?" asked Jerry promptly.

"Ye'll be Mr. Jerry Archer," retorted the other, after a contemplative whiff.

"I'm Mr. Archer," said Jerry, offering his hand, for he was beginning to be what politics calls a good mixer.

"Sandy Oakes is me name," said the other, taking the proffered hand, but in a very conservative grasp.

"What do I think?" he repeated, as his blue and somewhat watery eyes sifted Jerry carefully. "I think that the men'll not be after votin' agin their bread and butter."

"Bread and butter?" Jerry did not comprehend.

"The Republican party," explained Sandy, with a leer of triumph in his eye, "It feeds 'em. D'ye mind the early nineties—when the mills was closed here for three years? Democrat years!" The old weaver cocked his head on one side with a canny leer and the air of one who has planted a body blow at the first exchange.

"The Republican party? The tariff!" stammered Jerry. "Why, I'm for the tariff. We're all for the tariff. We're not fighting the Republican party. We're fighting a bunch of highbinders that has got control of the party machinery."

"Aye!" said Sandy, with a hoot-mon twang. "And the party machinery is the party. It's that that get's the tariff. Ye'll never get the boys to see different—"

not them that remembers the nineties—and most of them has heard tell of them.”

The simple, unstirred stolidity of the man's attitude was more illuminating even than his words, as revealing one voter's point of view.

Finding himself surrounded in the gaslight glare with a ring of interested faces, Jerry's glance instinctively appealed to them, but only to read in their expression approval of what the weaver had said. Behind the faces of men were faces of women on the curb, for women begin to take an interest in political discussion even where they cannot vote; especially do the wives of workingmen, since they have come to look more and more to politics for a solution of their own problems in domestic economy.

“But the tariff isn't an issue here,” urged Jerry, addressing himself to all. “It's honest government or dishonest. The taxes and the rents are higher than they ought to be, the service in sewers and water, police protection and—that's all poorer than it ought to be. Yo 're disfranchised by this machine; you are treated like slaves. Don't you see that, mothers?” he asked, calling out at a venture to the women on the curb.

But their faces were blank and expressionless for a moment; then they turned to each other and laughed or chuckled among themselves, although finally a voice from behind the front row, and therefore out of sight, called back:

“We don't have money to pay taxes or nothin' else if we don't have work.”

“Ay, ay, ye ken,” grunted Sandy, smuggling his pipe-bowl in his hand. “It's brandit on the souls o' the women, too. Ye'll no get the people o' Kensington to vote against the Republican party, that finds their bread and butter for them. I'm tellin' ye, Mr. Archer!” And turning away, the old Scotchman, amid murmurs of approval, wriggled out of the uncomfortable prominence in which he had suddenly found himself.

The feeling of disappointment in Jerry's heart must have reflected itself in his face.

"They can't see it, Mr. Archer," said a younger and more intelligent appearing man, pushing up. "These people have had their lesson, and they think they're canny. What Sandy said is what the mill bosses drive into them all the time, and they don't dare think anything else."

Jerry, detecting the note of sympathy and of understanding in this man, reached out his hand to him with a smile of relief.

"I thought everybody here was against me!" he exclaimed.

"Well, I'm against you, too, Mr. Archer," responded the other disconcertingly, "but for other reasons. I can't see how a vote for Penrose is any better than a vote for Vares."

"And it isn't," declared Jerry, stoutly.

"But that's what you're workin' for—you're fighting for Penrose."

"On the contrary," objected Jerry, a little heat creeping into his tone, "on the contrary, they are working for us."

The new speaker allowed his left eyelid to indulge in a cynical droop.

"Those birds?" he sneered. "Whoever knew them to moult a feather to line any nest but their own? My cousin was beaten till he afterward died by a bunch of election officers over in the Tenth Ward, and right in the polling place. Besides, I'm off of you reformers. I was for Blankenburg, and look what he did to us."

"Did to you?" exclaimed Jerry, bristling. "He gave you the best administration Philadelphia ever had."

"What did he do to us?" and the speaker's face flushed with anger at an unpleasant memory. "He double-crossed us—that's what. Mallory's my name, Mr. Archer, Jim Mallory, and I've been a bug for better government for twenty years, and the goat in this ward of every reform campaign till this one."

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

209

"S what you have, Jim," jeered the onlookers.

"Right over there on that corner," went on Mr. Mallory, shaking his hand violently at the spot where Jerry had made his speech; "right on that corner Blankenburg told the voters of this ward that if any city official dared to violate the Shern law in the coming election he would see that he lost his job. Well, what was the result? Why, on election day them pirates came in here and did just what they'd been a-doin'. They didn't pay no more attention to the Shern law than if there wasn't any. And when Blankenburg was elected these guys were scared to death. They knew their hour had come, and went sneakin' round the streets, the sickest-lookin' bunch for about a week you ever see. And then what happened? Why, Blankenburg makes a sob speech and says we'll all be good fellows together and overlook the past. None of these pirates was punished—not one of them.

"They came around and laughed in my face. Their wives insulted my wife. Their children stuck out their tongues at my children on the street. I was out of work and behind with my rent, and it was all right with my landlord, but these fellows went and stirred it up with the landlord's agent to have me arrested.

"I'm a workingman, too—not a bum or a loafer, and I'd have done the city good service in a lot of jobs. Instead, they kept the old political bums in, feedin' the hungry mouths of the Organization that was goin' to fight reform at the next election the same as ever and did fight it, and beat it, too, if you remember. If you want to know why George Porter was beat so bad, Mr. Archer, that was one reason. It don't pay to work for reform, because reform don't give a hoot for the individual; and it does pay to work for the Organization because it takes care of its friends. Now, Mr. Archer, that's all wrong."

Jerry's face was very thoughtful. He suspected that in some degree the speaker was misrepresenting Blankenburg, but that in a large degree there was jus-

tice in his plaint. At any rate, there was practical sense in it, for the young manufacturer was beginning to appreciate the necessity for division and ward leaders, so long as human nature in Philadelphia was constituted as it was, and election laws in Pennsylvania remained unchanged; and he was, moreover, much less shocked at the idea of a political worker being rewarded with a job than he had been two months ago, when talking to Michael Kelly.

"I wasn't workin' for a reform because I want to get a job," went on Mallory, as if reading Jerry's thoughts, "but because I believed in it. But somebody's got to have the jobs. It stands to reason that the city would get better service from employees that believe that the Government is run for the people and not for the bosses. Besides, if you want to win the next time—you've got to have a lot of workers in the wards that have been on the job right along, men that'll take time off, mornings, noons, nights, and Sundays, doing the work of a division leader, takin' care of people in legitimate ways, and takin' hold of things at the bottom where the people live. People get in trouble, boys get arrested that oughtn't to be arrested, folks get sick or hurt or in debt or lose their jobs; sometimes they die. The ward and division leader has got to be on the job lookin' after these people—extendin' a helpin' hand. It don't take a lot of money—it don't take anything corrupt or unfair a lot of the time. It just takes time and attention and human sympathy."

"So you think we'll not win to-morrow?"

"Not a chance!"

"Why?"

"Well, to my mind, there's several good reasons besides those we've been talkin' about. For one thing, a lot of these reformers that are howling the loudest ain't registered. They can't vote. Armstrong, the leader of your ticket, isn't registered."

Jerry blushed for Armstrong, but he also blushed for himself, his father, and his brother; not one of the three

Archers had taken the trouble at the proper time to register; yet he did not feel it necessary to explain this to Mallory.

"They say there's 20,000 of them not registered, and that's enough to lose," went on Mallory, each additional observation revealing that it was possible for a comparatively illiterate man to possess a high degree of political astuteness.

"Then there's the votes they buy or intimidate, and that's all the extra ones they need in order to win."

"I am prepared to admit," said Jerry, wishing to be honest with the fiercely frank Mr. Mallory, "that intimidation is practised. I have seen it practised—but buying?"

"I have seen 'em bought like cattle here at other elections," assured Mr. Mallory. "I've seen little bunches of voters get together and hold out all day for their price. Sometimes, if the election was close, they got it; sometimes, if it wasn't, the market broke and they cashed in for a quarter a piece."

"Horrible!" ejaculated Jerry, and yet he believed Mallory. "But with the secret ballot system," he reasoned, "I don't see how they make sure that the vote of the intimidated or purchased man is delivered."

"Our old friend, 'assistance to voters,' for one thing—marked ballots for another," explained Mallory.

Inwardly Jerry was rather staggered by what his informant told him so glibly, but outwardly he rallied to the extent of saying stoutly:

"This would be very depressing, Mr. Mallory, if I could adopt your cynical attitude toward the voters of Philadelphia, but I do not. I cannot think they are so craven or so obtuse as you imagine. I have no doubt there are many such people as you describe, but I expect such an outturning of the common people that the result will be a triumph!"

Mallory laughed good-naturedly.

"I know the feeling, Mr. Archer," he said. "I've

had it; but I know what it's like on the morning after, too. Anyhow, I wish you luck."

The production manager of the Archer Tool Works and the boss of some roustabout labour in the shipping department of a carpet factory shook hands and parted.

CHAPTER XX

ELECTION DAY

JERRY, despite the stoutness of his retort to Mallory's gloomy prediction, was in exceedingly thoughtful mood as he boarded a street car for downtown headquarters; but once amid those scenes of activity the hum of voices, the music of telephone bells, the expression of confidence in every face, and the optimistic reports that came in from all quarters, together with the general feeling of the supreme justice of their cause, raised his faith in victory to its highest level. While in this mood the young man was permitted a glimpse into the very innermost group of the Town Meeting party's campaign leaders and there heard from the lips of Penrose himself, shrewd campaigner that he was known to be, his estimate of a majority of 60,000 votes. Jerry went home and to bed with a sense of beginning already to participate in a triumph.

But on election day the things that Jim Mallory and Sandy Oakes had said to Jerry, and the things he had observed in Kensington, again got into the blood of his thinking. He tried to talk these out with several men down at headquarters, but found them too busy, too full of the idea that they couldn't lose, to listen to what Jerry was trying to tell them or to attempt a seriously considered reply to the questions he was wanting to ask.

"They don't understand! They won't understand!" he murmured to himself, and sat apart rather brooding over the noon edition of the *Courant* when an advertisement framed in the midst of reading matter caught his attention:

WANTED, A LEADER!

it announced and went on to specify:

Vote for whom you please, but remember that without organization the body of voters will always be helpless in the hands of political machines. There cannot be neutrals in this fight. You are either a patriot or you are not. You are a decent citizen or you are not. You are a political slacker or you are not. All decent citizens should unite in one universal organization to maintain high standards in political contests just as is done in our sports. Are those who will not join in such an association entitled to the franchise? Are you willing to support a bill making political service compulsory the same as military service? Do you know any decent citizen with organization ability who is willing to take the lead?

It struck Jerry, himself by profession a business organizer, that the advertiser was right. What the new movement of protest required was permanent and thorough organization and that this organization must await the appearance of a leader. What the Town Meeting party lacked was the presence within it of any one single outstanding character that somehow incarnated the things for which the movement was battling, somebody in the bigness and the integrity of whose personality all Philadelphia had faith. There was no such man.

"It is a popular uprising," Jerry tried to assure himself, but was in a fault-finding mood about the whole campaign. He even went back in his mind to that mass-meeting in the Academy of Music out of which the Town Meeting party had been born, and criticized it severely. Some resolutions had been passed—excellent resolutions. Some speeches had been made—excellent speeches—by a valiant priest, by an eminent clergyman, and by the most distinguished civic patriot Philadelphia had followed in a generation, former Mayor Blankenburg—but clergymen were supposed to make that kind of speeches and the patriot was old and broken; only his valiant spirit remained, and more than spirit was needed now.

Somehow, too, that meeting had missed fire. It was adjourned before the audience realized it had well begun, as if those in charge were afraid to rouse this latent power because they had no one hand who might guide and control it.

Jerry recalled how the audience had moved outside unwillingly and mingling with the crowd on the streets, still hung round the vicinity, reluctant to disperse.

A few fitful impromptu speeches had been made from doorsteps and automobiles, but no big striking note was sounded. No leader had appeared—no man strong enough and shrewd enough and daring enough to seize the situation and command it—no one to tell Philadelphia the whole truth, to rouse it to a sense of shame, to upbraid it, to scorn it, to whip it into real purposeful action.

"I will tell Philadelphia!" Jerry blurted out wrathfully, and then looked about quickly to see if any one had heard him, but everybody was too busy. Hearing in that confused hum of talk and telephone bells was too difficult for any to notice a remark not shouted in one's ears.

"Wanted, a leader!" Jerry had turned again to his advertisement. And there was no leader, he reflected pessimistically.

From that time onward through the day prognostications of politicians and reports of the ward workers were powerless to cheer young Archer. Nothing could now remove from his mind the conviction that the campaign of the Town Meeting party had carried in it the seeds of defeat from the beginning—nothing except actual returns from the polls.

When the first of these began to come in at 7 o'clock they gave a doubtful answer, but by 9 their intonation was clearer. The Town Meeting party was to be beaten. Jerry read the handwriting on the wall and gave up early, though he lingered for another hour at Town Meeting headquarters, while men about him were still fanning themselves with false hopes, offering ex-

planation after explanation, talking about fraud, talking about intimidation, talking about false returns, and talking about immediate plans for judicial contests; but this talk only irritated Jerry. The fact was that the people—the people had not risen!

In part, of course, Jerry's depression was the mere physiological reaction from that vast strain of extra labour he had undergone, for the business at the factory during these seven weeks he had driven along in his old irresistible way. Often and often he had gone from his last political meeting at night to his desk at the Works, where daylight had caught him still grinding. Now, therefore, he was physically jaded as well as spiritually disappointed, and felt the sudden weight of the whole combined mass crushing down upon his native optimism.

Feeling an impulse to drink his cup of bitterness alone, Jerry slipped away from headquarters and the company of the friends who had been fighting with him, to take up a position on the curb in Broad Street, where for two hours, from 10 o'clock till 12, he stood wedged in among the mass of spectators, reading election returns on the stereopticon screens on the tops of low buildings opposite, while past him in the wide street flowed a stream of celebrants of victory, the vapid, yawping, redfire-burning followers of those political freebooters to whom Jerry had opposed himself with all his might.

In endless, noisy procession, on foot, in wagons and in automobiles large and small, that were loaded with humanity from hood to tire carriers, with bands, with transparencies, with hands stolidly holding sticks of Greek fire, with throats hoarse from raucous cheering, with faces set in an expression of stupid exultation—so this procession of his victorious opponents registered upon the mind of Jeremiah Thomas Archer at the end of his first political campaign.

The crudeness, the triteness, the lack of imagination in the transparencies—"Fourth Ward solid for Salus";

"Dave Lane carries the old reliable Twentieth"; "The Twenty-eighth stands by its favourite son, Thomas B. Smith," and so on ad nauseam, were additional sources of irritation.

Jerry was disgusted, offended, insulted by all this cheap and rather mechanical enthusiasm. It struck him presently, however, that these were the voters, the ruling voters of Philadelphia. It was not the men of his own class, young or old, in clubs or business houses, whose votes had to be won in order to carry an election; it was this vast stream of the humanly elemental that did not think much, but that felt a great deal, which had to be persuaded and enlisted.

Jerry thought over his own speeches and asked himself how many of these howling patriots would have been moved by them. It seemed to him that very few of them would. As he stood thus musing, a strong arm gripped his own.

It was Victor Rollinson.

"Beaten!" exclaimed Jerry hollowly, for he knew that Victor understood how much he had counted on success.

"Let's go in and talk about it," proposed his lawyer, turning toward the Bellevue-Stratford.

"All right," said Jerry. "I've brooded all day and I want to talk; but, tell me, what about Sylvy?" And there, in the midst of this vast, unheeding throng that filled Broad Street from building wall to building wall for blocks, Jerry stopped and held the arms of his friend tight while he gazed up with sympathy into the great blonde face.

"No progress," said the big man quite as hollowly as Jerry had spoken of defeat. "But she has come to no harm yet. I have her watched every moment she is outside of her father's house."

"And you? You still feel the same way about her?"

"Gad, Jerry! I'll never feel any other way," said the big man soberly.

"And her father?"

"Nuttier than ever."

"But there must be some way to break through. This is intolerable. It can't go on. We can't let it go on."

"Leave it to me, old man, will you?" exclaimed Victor, with a sudden plea in his voice. "Leave the Aurenstys to me. Don't think about them even."

"But I can't help thinking about them. It was Sylvy started me on this whole campaign. Ruth is always asking when we are going to do something about her."

"Well, Maldono is going over the road for one thing," said Rollinson grimly. "The jury is sure to convict. And now let's get back to politics."

Victor turned once more toward the Bellevue. It was characteristic of the man that he was least willing to talk of that which doubtless occupied more of his thoughts than any other single thing.

While the lawyer buffeted his way through the crowd, Jerry followed in the wake, reflecting how strangely human plans miscarry only to involve and reinvolve the makers of them. It was but two months since he and Ruth had lightly formed themselves into a political party to save Philadelphia and had taken Sylvy for their watchword. Then Victor had come in to fight Maldono and to challenge in the courts the whole machinery of contractor bossism; but here had intervened the murder in the Fifth Ward and that swirl of events which had grown out of it to draw both men into the campaign of the Town Meeting party, forcing some of their plans into abeyance and completely recasting others.

Rollinson's heart, meantime, had, by a most curious chain of circumstances, been caught in the flame of a great love for Sylvy, who, held away from him by barriers of race and religion, and herself borne on the current of events flowing from her father's misfortunes, constituted for the time being, at least, an insoluble problem.

It was all strange, complex, impenetrable. There

was his own relation to Ruth, for example. Out of one phase of the tempestuous rapids upon which he seemed to have entered Ruth had emerged as his promised wife, and over every turbulent uncertainty this one fact hung like a rainbow mist illuminating with its radiance the darkness of all other clouds. At the same time her father and mother were not permitted to know of their engagement. Loyal to him, but considerate of them, and mysteriously informed by a woman's intuition of some shadow about to fall, Ruth was somehow changed. More tender, less willful, but with all her restless energy bottled up, she was held back from more than a heart interest in Jerry's campaign by some influence of her father's which acted in a manner Jerry could not quite comprehend.

"It was inevitable that we should be beaten," said Victor, while they waited for their order in a corner of the Bellevue grill. "But it clears the air. It gets rid of a lot of emotion and gives time to clean up the ranks and think."

"Victor!" exclaimed Jerry. "I was never so determined in my life. We were beaten because we lacked an effective ward and division organization that was at the same time clean and irreproachable."

"We were beaten," exclaimed Victor, "before we started! Whenever, in Philadelphia, a movement takes the name of Town Meeting party, or Washington party, or Liberty party, or any name, in fact, but Republican party, it spots the opposition to 150,000 votes right at the start."

"Exactly!" exclaimed Jerry, remembering what he had heard in Kensington the night before. "Exactly, because there's at least that many people in Philadelphia that have had it branded into their very souls that Republican elections and prosperity are inseparable."

"You can never overcome it!" said Victor.

"I don't propose to," said Jerry. "I'm going to take advantage of it."

"How?"

"I'm not going to fight the Republican City Committee," said Jerry. "I'm going to fight for control of it. That's what Johnson did in California. He made the Republican State central committees a tool of the people instead of a tool of the big interests."

"But how are you going to do that in Philadelphia?"

"There's an election next spring of members of the Republican City Committee," replied Jerry. "I'm going to set out to build up a ward and division organization, and then we'll have a candidate for that committee wherever a candidate is to be elected. We'll go to work on that proposition. We'll say to the people 'This is a fight for control of the Republican City Committee in the interest of the people, and not of the bosses!' Instead of spotting the opposition to 150,000 votes, we'll spot ourselves with all this Town Meeting vote to start with and——"

"Not much, you won't," interrupted Victor. "Every man who voted the Town Meeting party at this election is automatically barred from voting for these Republican committeemen in the spring. He's not a Republican till he re-registers and so declares himself."

"Is that so?" asked Jerry, temporarily dashed. "Say," he inquired after a minute, "isn't there a—when is the next city election?"

"In November, 1919. Two years off."

"And the primaries would be in September, just like this year?"

"Yes."

"And this Republican City Committee elected next May will nominate the ticket to be voted on at the primaries?"

"Yes."

"But we would be able by petition to put a string of anti-boss Republican candidates on that primary ballot?"

"Of course."

"All right," said Jerry, thinking quickly; "then that's our campaign. We'll ding-dong it into the

people's ears that this isn't an anti-Republican fight. It is anti-contractor, anti-boss, anti-bad-Government. To prove that it isn't an anti-Republican fight, we'll hang out tariff banners and pledge every candidate not to run independently at the November election if he is beaten at the primary. In other words, this will be a primary fight. If we're beaten, we'll take our medicine and go on perfecting our organization and getting ready to make our next fight at the spring committee election in 1920."

Jerry had spoken with great earnestness, his face lighting with enthusiasm as his mind grasped each new detail while Rollinson had listened with surprise and excited noddings of approval.

"You're right, old man, you're right!" he exclaimed heartily. "You're right! That's common sense. That's a challenge that'll command attention."

"It's sense and sense only," insisted Jerry. "Think of trying to buck the Republican party in Philadelphia or in Pennsylvania with all of its prestige, entrenchments, and ramifications, and with the policy of protection, on which half the industries of the State are built, for its chief political asset. As Jerry stopped speaking a hand was laid on his shoulder and the young man found himself looking into the broad, shrewd face of a man well advanced in years, who gazed down upon him with a kindly, fatherly air."

"I beg your pardon, but I've been sitting just round the pillar from you," said the stranger, speaking with a crisp rapidity of utterance that belied the appearance of age, yet seemed to match well with that suggestion of shrewdness and capability in his face. "I couldn't help hearing what you have been saying. Your idea is sound. This game can be beaten. If you will come and see me, I think I can tell you how."

Jerry flushed at realizing that he had been overheard, and though the gentleman's intentions were so obviously benign, hesitated while a card was extracted from a morocco case and placed before him.

Jerry glanced at the card, and read the name of a jurist of high standing and scholarly attainments, once prominent in the city's life, but now seldom seen in the daily prints. Before this name, backed by that shrewd, kindly face, Jerry capitulated instantly.

"Thanks, Judge, I should be glad to," he said, rising instantly to his feet. The two men shook hands.

"Call me on the phone for an appointment," said the venerable lawyer, passing on.

"That's a lucky chance!" exclaimed Victor, while Jerry had seated himself again.

"He's a strange, keen character. He's been friendly with every boss in the history of the city, and yet they say he believes in good government. His bench record is clean. He's erudite and wise. If you could make a friend of him, and get his advice now!"

"I will make a friend of him and get his advice," declared Jerry with assurance, for he was flushed with the bigness of his new idea.

"Pretty late for him to be out."

"Oh, the old boy keeps hours when there's anything exciting on," laughed Rollinson. "They used to say that when he got interested in a fight, he never took his clothes off till it was over. He's retired now, you know; just sticks to his study and reads; but he still keeps in touch with the older men, and the younger fellows with ambitions who attract his attention and enjoy his confidences count themselves pretty lucky. They call him the Sage of Philadelphia."

"Remember the name well, of course," said Jerry, "but I never hear of him in the newspapers any more."

"That's because his activities all belong to a forgotten decade; but he's keen and modern. I tried some of my first cases before him, and got a respect for the man that never left me. There's a native shrewdness in him that will surprise and entertain you. Apparently he's a bookworm, but actually his long suit is human nature; and man, oh, man, but he knows this town."

CHAPTER XXI

THE SAGE OF PHILADELPHIA

THE next night at 9 o'clock Jerry was calling by appointment on the sage of Philadelphia at his residence. An ancient piece of weatherworn humanity, who looked as if he might have been looted from an Egyptian museum, admitted him. This, indeed, was rather fitting since the atmosphere of the house itself was that of a bureau of antiquities. Everything smelled of the past. Busts of the ancients stood about; nothing alive was in sight. The walls of the hall were lined with books, and every door opened upon vistas of books, cases of books, tables of books, alcoves of books; while everywhere round were great easy chairs with footrests, with bookarms and reading lamps carefully adjusted so that the owner, browsing in these Elysian pastures of the mind, might drop down where he would sip at ease whatever ambrosial sweets of literature appealed to him.

But there was an ultimate room, large and more bookish than the rest, and in this room an ultimate corner. Here in the horseshoe inclosure formed by three desks, piled so high with volumes that they formed a sort of grotto round him, sat the encaverned sage amidst the lettered wisdom of the ages. But for all this enviroing of the past the old man himself registered, as Victor had said, as intensely modern and human. He greeted Jerry with a smile and the offer of a cigar.

"I smoke some twelve a day in an effort to impair my vigorous constitution," the octogenarian laughed. "You see," he carried on, "I made a great mistake in

retiring from the bench at seventy. I have thought of applying for a writ of error."

But these were the only words the sage would utter about himself. When Jerry pressed for the secret of all these books, and the particular vein of his interest in them, the inquisitive thrusts were all skillfully parried.

"The game can be beaten, here in Philadelphia," the sage remarked, by way of taking up the conversation where he had dropped it the night before. "It can be beaten. I have sat here looking out for a good many years, waiting to see a man on the horizon who looked as if he could do the job. Lately I've been thinking that perhaps you were the man. When my dining partners pointed you out to me as you came in last night I was interested in studying you. Such scraps of your conversation as, in enthusiastic moments, got over to my ear, rather convinced me that you are the man to build the next machine in Philadelphia."

Jerry blushed at the surprising compliment, according to his foolish habit, but leaned forward eagerly as he admitted with appealing frankness.

"By George, I'd like to be, Judge."

"It means organization right down to the roots," went on the sage as if unaware of having been interrupted. "In a business way they tell me you're a great organizer. Now the job will not be organizing machines and 'hands.' It will be organizing hearts and homes. People generally don't see it that way, do they?" chuckled the sage, as he caught the sentimental note in his own words.

"Now you see the reformers always start out with the idea that the boss is a bad man. Well, generally he isn't. Generally he's a pretty good man—in a personal way, you understand—but he's a practical one, and he capitalizes his own good-heartedness and whatever virtues he's got. He starts out by being a good fellow and ends by being a boss, but away back behind,

he's looking out for number one all the time—just like a sensible person," and the Judge smiled frankly, as if there were to be no concealments between him and Jerry.

"The bosses are likeable men. They get close to a lot of people. They put human beings first and principles last. The reformer puts principles first and human beings last. He never gets very close to people. He loves humanity, but he doesn't give a damn for people. Try to understand that, Mr. Archer.

"Your reformers, now, are the opposite. They deal in high principles and people ought to respond to that kind of dealing, but men are not creatures of thought. They are creatures of emotion. They do not respond to abstractions but to the personal touch. You are one reformer who began by being interested in people. That's why there's hope for you and in you."

Jerry looked surprised.

"Oh, yes," laughed the sage, "I know all about Rosensweig and Strongburger and Sylvy and—and Ruth."

Jerry coloured under the gentle raillery in the old man's tone as he uttered the last word, but inwardly smiled, for nobody but Ruth and himself knew the last delicious word as to how things stood between themselves.

"That's another of the reasons why I think you're the man to build an organization for hand-picking the voters of Philadelphia," the sage continued. "Besides," and the old man's face once more lighted with that gently rallying smile, "you've got a sort of a flair for the spectacular in you that's rather necessary if one is going to wake up the combination of phlegmatic German, non-resisting Quaker, and self-satisfied Englishman that was long ago stirred into the veins of Philadelphia and acts upon her nerves like a powerful sedative to this day."

"Spectacular?" Jerry had to laugh as he thought back. "It does look that way, doesn't it?"

"Take the matter of the sign. That was a beautiful piece of audacity. And when they burned it your retort was genius, political genius, and nothing less. And so I think, Jerry—your friends call you that, I believe—I think you're the man to build the machine."

"I'd like to do it," said Jerry. "I've seen its necessity, and I've thought about it a lot. but it seems such a visionary scheme for one man to undertake in a short time. Take the Vare and McNichol machines, for instance. They've been a lifetime building."

"But they were built around a personality, and the appeal of any personality is limited. Yours is to be built around an idea and the idea is city-wide. It's a year and a half now until the next city election campaign will be warming up. A man with your qualities who gets out and hustles, and with the advertising you've had, can build an organization in a year and a half that will sweep this city."

"Do you think so?" exclaimed Jerry eagerly.

"And it's got to be done," went on the Judge, half musingly now, as if he had not heard Jerry's question.

The venerable lawyer looked very grim for a moment and his eye lighted as if with a sudden longing for youth once more. But the light died. He would never be young again, and his hope focussed itself again on the vigorous youth who sat opposite him.

"People tell me, too," said Jerry, "that some of the best lawyers in Philadelphia find things so stacked against them that they simply can't win a case. That, for instance, if you want to make sure of victory in certain sorts of cases, you go for instance to," and Jerry mentioned one or two lawyers very familiar to Philadelphia, "and from the minute they accept your retaining fee you need give yourself no further anxiety."

"But that doesn't necessarily argue venality," objected the Judge. "Those lawyers you have mentioned are pretty smart men."

"But they are inferior men—inferior to the type of legal mind I was speaking of first."

"But, remember," flashed the old jurist quickly, and with significant emphasis, "inferiority is itself a qualification. Sometimes the trial lawyer with the big mind fails because he cannot reduce himself to the level of knowing just what influence will weigh heaviest with the smallest mind on the jury; and if he did know, he would not stoop to use it."

"Inferiority is itself a qualification," repeated Jerry reflectively. "I never thought of that before, but it's a pearl of wisdom, Judge. It explains a great many things."

"It does," agreed the Judge. "That's where your boss beats out your reformer so much of the time. The boss has usually got a barnyard strain in him. He gets down to the mass level without effort, and says the things and does the things that appeal to that elemental something which is in all of us and supplies the determining factor in the actions of most of us."

"And that," said Jerry, "connects up with this popular notion that the Republican party must be supported because it makes the cornucopia of the protective tariff to pour out its gifts upon the city."

"But," warned the sage, speaking quickly, "you must not criticize the tariff. You must stand for it. Your idea was right as you put it last night. Don't fight this Republican party obsession in the minds of the voters. I'm a Democrat myself, one of the thirty thousand irreconcilables in the city; but don't fight this deeply inculcated, if blind, faith of the voters in the Republican party. Take advantage of it. Go in for control of the Republican City Committee."

"And the first step is?"

"The first step is money. You will need money; but you will get it. In fact, Mr. Archer, you will be waited on within very few days, if plans of which I heard this afternoon are carried out, and offered money."

"If" Jerry was surprised again. The Judge only smiled.

"Oh," he said, "a good many men besides myself have been watching you. They've been talking you over at clubs, in hotel lobbies, and on the golf links. You have made yourself a marked man, and there's a disposition to set you up and pin things on you. Don't let them. But take the money. Millionaires have faith in money. The first thing a millionaire thinks about when you enlist his enthusiasm for any movement is his checkbook. He is apt to suppose that he can order an election as he orders a limousine. Look at that Mitchel campaign in New York. Mitchel was the best friend the masses of that city ever had in the Mayor's chair; but unfortunately for him, he had pleased the millionaires also. They appropriated him; they surrounded him and gilded him with their attentions; they made him look like one of them; and they smothered him in money. They drowned him and damned him with money. Now you remember this at the beginning. A little money is necessary; a lot of it is TNT."

Jerry, recovering his head somewhat after the first giddiness caused by hearing that other men were deliberately planning to put him at the head of a save-Philadelphia movement, smiled as he acknowledged the keenness of these observations.

"And what would be the next step, Judge, in your opinion?"

"Organize!" came the terse answer from the old lips which drooled wisdom so steadily. "Organize a dozen or fifteen men you've met round over the city that would be with you on such a proposition; men that you think you can trust and work with. Invite 'em to dinner and get started; pick out a leader for each of the wards; then break down past the ward leaders and pick out a leader for each division. Your ward leader's got to do that, because he's got to handle these division leaders and deliver 'em. They must be acceptable to him; or, if he can't swing the right kind of men, you'll have to pick a new ward leader who can.

You're going to start, you know, with too many high-brows as ward leaders, but as you move along you'll throw them out, because they can't get the elbow touch. Don't be surprised if in a year the best help you're getting is from men that can hardly make their mark. Many a fellow that has no genius at all for reading and high thinking has got a great one for human understanding and for personal leadership among small groups."

"I've begun to notice that already," said Jerry.

"And don't overlook the importance of these division leaders. Reformers generally do. The first the reform worker in the division is likely to hear that they know of his existence up at headquarters is when they send him out a bale of tracts on the commission form of government the night before election and expect him to circulate them before morning and carry the division before night. Don't make that mistake. Your division leader has got to be a little father to his ward, and you've got to give him money to work with. It doesn't take a lot of money; it doesn't mean corruption. It doesn't mean anything improper. A great many times it only means somebody around to be a friend, to go bail, to give sympathy or advice, or to make a small loan.

"Your division leader has got to be in a position to be a good neighbour to everybody in his ward. You enable him to do that, and give him a little encouragement, and get the right ideas sifted around, and you'll be astonished to see what a vote he'll turn out. There's a moral centre in every voting division, just as there is an immoral one. You establish a certain stability to that moral centre, so people know where to find it, week in and week out, and make it a helpful force in their lives, and you'll be gratified at the way people rally around it, especially if it's evident there's a big parent moral centre in the ward and in the city for the local to back up against when it needs more power."

"And jobs?" Jerry employed the politician's vernacular.

"You'll have to promise some of these people jobs. And why not? The best workers in the city of every class are going to be attracted into your organization. If they're good workers for you, they'll be good workers for the city. That's where you reformers fail again, through dealing too much in abstractions and not enough in humanities."

And so for hours, with Jerry listening open-mouthed, and asking an occasional question, the older man went on, spilling out in one night, from his long years of keen observation, a whole course in the history of practical politics in Philadelphia. It was an outflow that two months ago must have run off Jerry's mind without sinking in; but now experience had freshly ploughed and harrowed the soil of his thinking until it seemed to him that every drop was absorbed, informing and watering his intentions.

"And now," said the old man, at length, "having smoked my limit of cigars for the day, and having entertained myself with a very pleasant prospect, I think I shall let you go. Come to me when you want advice. If I think you need it but do not come I shall send for you."

"Agreed!" said Jerry, wringing his hand. "I cannot thank you sufficiently."

"The only way you can thank me is to go out and use yourself up in charging the Philadelphia windmill. You might win, you know."

Jerry laughed boyishly.

He laughed again, when, standing outside on the step at 1 o'clock in the morning, with all the myriad lights of the city spread out before him, and a strange prickling glow in his veins, there came a sense of mysterious Hertzian waves playing round him, of unseen forces gathering to lend him power and make him the master of an empire.

"Destiny!" he breathed exultantly. "Destiny is taking hold of me."

But immediately he sneered himself out of this boyish

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

231

mood of elation, insisting that he was no fool of an ecstatic dreamer, but a sober, practical, scientific production engineer, who was going to work to produce, within one year and a half, a majority for clean government in the city of Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XXII

ORGANIZING VICTORY

JEREMIAH THOMAS ARCHER did not wait for anybody to come forward with offers of money, as the sage had suggested. Jerry was a poor waiter. Instead he went to work upon his own account among the group of men, some well-to-do and some of moderate circumstances, whom the campaign of the last two months had revealed to him as citizens likely to join in the support of an enterprise such as he contemplated.

The young man met with ready encouragement, and pushed his solicitations of funds. He quickly learned that the money pool to support his organization plan, as foretold by the sage, had become a fact, and that to-night he was expected to meet in a private room of one of the city's most exclusive clubs a score or more of men who would make known to him their generous purpose. This was a tryst that Jerry naturally kept, though with some misgivings mingled in his elation and curiosity.

"Not a man here worth less than a million dollars!" whispered someone to him, "yourself included."

"But you fellows can feel like a million," laughed Jerry. "I never can, because mine is an undivided prospect in a going concern—going so fast that it absorbs our surplus in enlargements as fast as we can earn it, or faster."

Glancing about him, Jerry was somewhat relieved to find that he knew personally everyone present. He was interested, too, to observe, that while these men were wealthy, the very rich and the very powerful were not represented. They were, with one or two excep-

tions, the small or garden variety of millionaire, who are usually the sort with consciences least impaired by their riches.

In the course of the meeting Jerry talked of his plans and the millionaires talked of theirs. As a result the young man found himself at the close with an organization fund of some thousands of dollars per month and the assurance that all the money he could possibly need would be forthcoming.

"You understand, gentlemen," smiled Jerry, as he fingered one of the checks, "that you just kiss this money good-bye when you give it to me, and that you don't ever expect to see any profit from it in any personal sense. It buys no favours and no immunities. It seems almost disrespectful to say that to you, generous gentlemen, but we've got to disregard all niceties if we're going to understand each other."

Instead of showing resentment the millionaires laughed.

"Get busy, Jerry, and don't bother us except for money," was the tenor of their response.

Thus easily was understanding and good feeling established—too easily, it would almost seem. Jerry dubbed them his angels, whereat they smiled appreciatively. Later he called them his angel chorus, even when some of the chorus began to sing off the key.

With his funds assured, Jerry set to work immediately, and in the utmost secrecy. Without one blare of trumpets or squeak of the fife or one tiny flare of red light, he went at his cool proposal to organize the voting divisions and wards of the city of Philadelphia against the men who ruled it at the present time.

And there was plenty of wind for Jerry's sails, for these were the days when the public prints reeked with the sensational court struggles going on between the beaten and battered Town Meeting party and the triumphant city Republican machine—the contests, the allegations of fraud, the opening of some ballot boxes, the refusal to open others, the indictment and

the preliminary hearings of alleged conspirators in the Fifth Ward murder, the scandal over the magistrates, the mass-meeting of 3,000 protesting policemen and their threat to strike—these and all that series of astounding revelations of misgovernment and political scandal which coloured the news of the day.

Jerry's task was first to select a leader in each ward of the city, and they, as fast as selected, turned to their own task of picking leaders for each division in their respective wards. As these were chosen, Jerry set himself to the herculean task of getting acquainted with them personally.

"We well-to-do men are able to give our time," Jerry used generally to say by way of breaking the ice with these men. "Perhaps you are not. If we can do anything for you in the way of getting you work or making your present position more satisfactory or helping your business, let us know." (This last in the case of the small shopkeepers, who often made an ideal division leader.)

Frequently the type of man selected had no need of this kind of help. Sometimes he wanted a different situation, or, if in business, some favour in the way of lengthened credit or something of that sort. All such wants were considered and taken care of, if such a course seemed warranted. When the ward leader could not supply them as needed, Jerry himself went unhesitatingly to supporters of his organization, demanding jobs of the sort which appeal to the type of man who makes a good division leader in the industrial or small residence wards, i. e., situations as watchmen, guards, checkers, and the like—places in which one draws comfortable pay without bending one's back in severe physical toil.

The second question with all of these men invariably had to do with what rewards they might be in position to dispense.

"What's the idea? Do we get some jobs to hand around after election?"

"You do," said Jerry flatly, and thereby horrified some of his reformer friends to the point of audible murmurings. "You do. That's the kind of a reformer I am. The man who serves this organization will be recognized as entitled to the first consideration when it comes to selecting employees for the city; but he will have to display some natural fitness for the job, and he will have to earn his money to get it. There will be no political assessments, and the organization will be seeking no favours for itself at the hands of Councils, police, or anybody else. All it aims at is honest government and the greatest good for all the people."

The men always listened to the first half of this speech gratefully, and to the last half of it doubtfully.

"It's what ought to be, all right," they would murmur half heartedly.

"It's what w'il be," Jerry used to declare, bringing his hand down impressively upon the desk before him.

And the miracle of his personality was that these men went away believing him, or at least believing in him, and they fell to calling him "the boss." The first time Jerry heard this appellation applied to himself he chuckled gleefully.

There was one respect, however, in which young Archer found himself unable to match the practice of the rival machine. He had been told they were in the habit of allowing division leaders from twenty-five to fifty dollars per month to be sent in that form of charity, which, ranging from the buying of drinks to the purchase of a shroud, was deemed necessary to establish the division leader's position as next friend to every man in trouble. But when Jerry struck off the figures with a pencil, \$50 a month to 1,300 voting divisions, his total was \$65,000 and he stopped aghast.

"Is it possible, Judge?" he asked the sage one night. "Where can they get such a sum from?"

"They have sources that ye know not of," smiled the sage. "Besides, it is probable they get by with much less, take it the whole year round. The machine,

with its methods, can always use things for money that honest people cannot. This is the point at which you must close your purse-strings and rise to dependence on the power of your moral appeal. Be assured that where exerted through the right sort of a human agency it will be as effective in the poorest division in the city as in the richest. Of course, you must be able to give your division men some money for use in extreme cases, but it had better be hard to get. Make him go to the ward man for it."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ANGEL CHORUS

TO RENDER his tactical position as regards the tariff absolutely secure, Jerry had inserted the word Republican into the name of his enterprise, prefixing it, however, with the word Real, thereby making a distinction at once necessary and invidious.

The organization of the Real Republicans marched forward so satisfactorily that in mid-spring, about the time when the formality of electing a new Republican city committee was gone through, a meeting of the big-gun financial supporters of reform was called to hear young Archer's report. This was so encouraging that it kindled hearty enthusiasm. As Jerry went on with the outlining of his achievements thus far, his hearers glowed, nudged, nodded, chuckled, and broke out into applause.

"We ought to have a candidate for Mayor in mind," they seemed all at once to decide, and made this decision vocal.

"But the campaign is more than a year away," argued Jerry.

"Nevertheless we ought to settle the question now," insisted one whose political faith was in preparedness. And this idea the whole score of moneyed men attached themselves to stubbornly.

Now this was rather characteristic of moneyed men. Having met and struck hands, having opened check-books and underwritten the cost of a thing, they are apt to consider that the matter is done and all that remains is for them to name an executive and go back to their golf.

"But," objected the young leader, "the minute we begin to name candidates we sow the seeds of division; we make enemies of those who hope to be selected and are not, and enemies of their friends.

"Besides, isn't that a choice we ought to leave to the people?"

"The people? Absurd! Where did the people come in? The people are not doing this thing. They are having it done for them."

"The rank and file of our organization, at least, ought to be consulted," persisted Jerry. "Men chosen from among these ward and division leaders will ultimately constitute the city committee and name the candidates for the primaries. We ought both to train them by letting them work out the list of candidates we're going to stand for a year from now and give them plenty of time to do it."

The millionaires exchanged glances. Two or three of them were among Jerry's list of ward leaders. Most of them were not; they were unfitted to be leaders. They were drivers—by nature, by training, and by occupation.

"We're paying for the campaign," suggested one of them, perhaps not meaning to be indelicate.

"Not altogether," reminded Jerry, into a silence that was pregnant as being the first test of his own capacity for leadership over these men. "Besides, if you name a candidate you'll only be putting a man up for a target. Let's be thoroughgoing. Let's put it up to the good government machine we're building to find out the type of man the people want. Every one of these thirteen hundred division leaders we have or hope to have is an observation post on public opinion. Let's wait and hear from them."

"I know who they'll name," whispered William H. Sinclair to his neighbour. Sinclair, who was the leader of a ward in the Real Republican organization, had made his money in plumbers' supplies. "They're talking it already. It's Jeremiah Thomas Archer."

"Archer's my man!" murmured Hubert Morrison, who had inherited his millions, and who had been the first to propose naming a candidate.

"Of course," assented others who overheard, and "Nobody else to be considered," was echoed round the room.

"A clean young man with organization power and rare qualities of leadership!" declared Henry Simpkins, standing up suddenly, his utterance and his obvious intent followed by cries of approval and a series of hand-clasps. "I move you, Mr. Chairman," began Simpkins and then it dawned upon Jerry, who had been watching this stir all over the room, that these benevolently minded gentlemen had prepared a little surprise for him. They had been meaning to make him their candidate for Mayor, thinking thereby both to gratify him and to make sure that this organization their money was helping to build up did not get into the wrong hands.

"But, gentlemen," interrupted Jerry, his usually florid face almost white. "Stop! Stop! You unnerve me. I—I couldn't work if you do this. I have been serving you with no thought of personal ambition, and no selfish interest beyond the satisfaction of bossing a big job in the right direction. From time to time these men whom I have been attaching to our machine have said to me, 'And what do you want, Mr. Archer?' 'Nothing, so help me God!' I have been able to answer. 'Nothing, but good government in the city of my birth.'"

"But you cannot resist if, in the course of your activities, there should develop a universally popular demand for you as our candidate for Mayor," argued Simpkins.

Jerry hesitated for a moment, his features expressing still greater surprise, and a succession of rapid mental processes.

"No, frankly, I could not," he answered presently; "but, gentlemen, my well-meaning friends! I can

resist you, and I ask you not to do this thing which is so evidently in your mind. It is generous, but it is not wise. I ask you not to do it."

There was an interval of uncertainty, while looks were exchanged, with murmurings in undertones and conversations in pantomime. Now it is the policy of the rich not to override the wishes of a generous employee when they can achieve their purpose in other ways—and these gentlemen regarded Jerry as an employee. He was spending their money to do their job for them. The chairman looked at Mr. Simpkins, and Mr. Simpkins was looking at Sinclair and Morrison. Simultaneously these men nodded assent to each other's glances; then they bowed acquiescence to Jerry's expressed wish, and Mr. Simpkins sat down, with his motion still sticking like a fishbone in his throat. There was an undercurrent of approving voices mixed with laughter, for the millionaires knew it was inevitable that Jerry should become the Real Republican candidate for Mayor.

Unable to read their minds, the young man felt that he had achieved a necessary victory, for it was in his humble but determined purpose, to make Victor Rolinson the candidate of the Real Republicans.

Victor was unconsciously doing his part to make this possible. True to his word, he had landed Maldono behind the bars; he had associated himself with the prosecution of the alleged conspirators in the murder and election cases. His courage, his force, his legal acumen commended themselves every day more favorably to the people of Philadelphia. "Victor is a natural leader; I am a natural organizer," Jerry said to himself. Therefore he continued his efforts to perfect the organization, but at the same time he engaged in a campaign for immediate bettering of housing conditions among the poor, a subject which had claimed his attention ever since that visit to the Aurentskys in their reeking garret.

One of these activities involved a proposition to cut

open, as with a surgeon's knife, a particularly nasty carcinomatous growth of tumble-down tenements of the usual three-story kind by opening a street through the middle of them. Jerry got abundant local support for this project, and when he went down to City Hall with the idea it was gratifying to see the number of men in Councils who were glad to know him and anxious to oblige if they could do so without antagonizing the powers above them. The powers above, it appeared, did not want to lend any wind to Jerry's political sails by allowing him to pose as an embattled champion of the poor; accordingly, the reigning influences fell in with the project and the legislation for the new street was going through Councils like a bullet through green cheese.

But suddenly an awful note of discord arose in Jerry's angel chorus. It appeared that this pestilential aggregation of tenements belonged to Hubert Morrison's sister, and was a part of the old Morrison estate. To drive that street through would cut a haughty maiden sister's income some thousands in the year, besides assessing the property for a very considerable sum of money for street improvements.

In vain Jerry argued the profit of the local community above the profit of the absentee landlady—Hubert Morrison was obdurate. This was black ingratitude. It was ungallant. It was an attack on the sacred source of his support—vested property. When Hubert made this argument he looked about him for approval in the committee, and there were signs on some faces that such approval was his. Jerry saw the look about and saw the signs, but the street went through, and Hubert closed his checkbook, which is to say that he furred his angel wings and passed out of the chorus in high dudgeon, taking two or three sympathetic friends with him.

Jerry was thereby surprised at the littleness of mankind, and disappointed, too, that—though Hubert Morrison was gone he left a suspicious area around his

late place in the committee, an area of faces who used to listen to the young leader's projects with a certain air of doubtfulness, as if, after all, this man Archer might be a fanatic—a fanatic to their mind being one who, despite his birth and associations, did not listen to reason when it jingled in the pockets of his fellow millionaires. But the young man, undismayed if not unwarned, sailed straight into the wind with head high and eye on the compass.

It was less than two months after this, however, that another of Jerry's civic-betterment projects ran afoul of some profiteering from among his own supporters. Across the street from his own factory was a half block of land the Archers had under lease for storage purposes; but the land acquired for the site of the new works did away with the necessity of using this half block any longer. In terminating the lease it occurred to Jerry that there was inadequate playground space for the children of the neighbourhood, and that the vacant lots might be turned to that account. He talked to Ward Leader Fritz Schaff about getting the city to buy the ground and equip it. Schaff was taken with the idea; especially provided he could appear to make the first move in the matter.

"What does the land cost?" he asked. "Three hundred and eighty thousand was what Simpkins priced it to us for six months ago, when we were increasing our real estate holdings," explained Jerry. "That was high enough then, and it is high enough now."

That was the Simpkins who had risen to move to make Jerry the Real Republican candidate for Mayor.

Select Councilman Schaff, big with the bigness of his idea, went to work on his playground proposition with vigour. He aligned the other ward leaders on the side of the river with him, and then went to the ruling power in the city committee. Anxious to do something to placate the people of the district after the prejudice engendered by the fight over the tool works franchise, the Organization eagerly agreed to

the project. But one day Schaff called on Jerry with excitement in his manner.

"You said \$380,000, didn't you—yes?"

"I did," recalled Jerry.

"Well, Simpkins says that was the price to you, if the city wants it, it's \$600,000."

"Preposterous!" declared Jerry. "Why, I didn't think—Simpkins—I'll talk to Simpkins."

And he did, but Simpkins was cold, obdurate, grasping!

"The city wants it. That's different. That enhances the value," he snapped, with an avid gleam in his fishy eye.

"But what kind of good citizenship is it that holds up the city in a purchase like this, which is for the benefit of the children of the poor?"

"It's not a question of citizenship," rebutted Simpkins. "It's a matter of business to get all I can for my property."

"It's a question of graft," said Jerry bluntly, looking Robert N. Simpkins through and through with a glance of his keen blue eye.

"Graft!" protested Simpkins, colouring with indignation but striving to retain that self-control which was the hallmark of his breeding. "Nothing of the sort! But, say, I'll tell you there was graft in the proposition that came to me. That fellow Schaff's proposal was \$450,000 for the lots, \$400,000 to me, and \$50,000 to him."

A shadow crossed Jerry's face. "I'm not much surprised at him, Simpkins," he retorted after a moment, "but you—\$600,000! I didn't think that of you, Simpkins."

"Look here, young man!" and the outraged Simpkins adjusted his glasses for a final and demolishing gaze, "it's my opinion that you're making a public nuisance of yourself. I never did see one of these reformer-busy-bodys yet that wasn't going around ramming his nose into everybody's business."

After this the angel chorus was minus the voice and checkbook of Mr. Simpkins, but Jerry only smiled while the playground project went slickly through Councils and the City Solicitor instituted condemnation proceedings aimed at the lots in question.

It is but just to say, however, that these defections did not represent the majority of the real Republican finance committee; the majority stood pat, hemming sometimes and hawing a little, but loyally supporting. The nearest to anything like another disaffection arose when Jerry, prodding into the Bureau of Highways, stumbled upon two men drawing comfortable salaries for no visible services.

With the whole city government under fire one of these men was promptly discharged. Immediately it was developed that this man was a cousin-in-law of Ellis Chamberlain, who was a faithful and generous contributor to Jerry's political exchequer. It developed also that with this man jobless Ellis would be called upon to support the lopped-off family until such time as the head of it could be landed in another sinecure of some sort or other. Ellis took this very hard; at home he reproached his wife, who wept for the woes of her favourite cousin; in committee he reproached Jerry, peevish and wailing to one another of his fellow angels as to whether they did not think it was pretty hard to be taking the bread and butter out of the mouths of children; whereas some sympathized outwardly and smiled inwardly while old Jedediah Wyckoff sat up and barked:

"Look here, Chamberlain, what kind of a hard-boiled egg are you to be wanting the city to support your relatives? D—— it, you make me cry when you tell about those children (Jedediah's hard eyes had probably never known a tear). If you're not able to take care of 'em, I'll get 'em in at the Poor Farm, or— here, we'll take up a collection for 'em right now."

At this Ellis looked ashamed and, behind a cloud of verbal camouflage, went home to reproach his wife

some more, while old Jedediah remarked with emphasis and a fierce glance about at his fellow committeemen, that good men's wives' cousins and brothers and brothers-in-law were responsible for as much inefficiency in office as the boss-system itself.

"Isn't it the limit," he declared, "how this having to provide for one's wife's relatives will make a knee-crooking hypocrite out of a man."

"You being an old bachelor," retorted a friend of Ellis's, "nobody knows what it would have made out of you." In response to which old Jedediah only cleared his throat and rumbled like a steampipe in distress.

CHAPTER XXIV

FOR SYLVY AURENTSKY!

"FOR Sylvy Aurentskyl" That had been the slogan which Ruth had proposed and Jerry had accepted back in those callow days of six months ago, when each was so blissfully ignorant of what it meant. Jerry was past slogans now. He was working on a big idea. The turn of events had swept him away from Sylvy, except as one face in a city of 2,000,000. He was fighting now for thousands of Sylvy Aurentskys and Mary Moores and Jane Does and every other sort of girl, while old Victor!—

But between Victor and Sylvy was the insurmountable barrier which the attorney, suddenly humbled and cautions before this great passion of his, had found no way to break past, even sufficiently to begin his wooing, fearing in part to frighten the girl and in part to have his motives totally misunderstood. In the meantime, he contented himself with watching over every step of the girl's life, his concern for her welfare never relaxing for a moment, while his heart waited and hungered. But in the midst of this waiting something happened that upset the lawyer-lover terribly.

Sylvy, oppressed by the hopeless grind of poverty, thrown into despair by the consciousness that her father had totally lost his grip and was drifting nearer and nearer to the point when he would be a mere human firebrand in the hands of a skilled agitator like Levene, began to take on an attitude of moody indifference. She dawdled over her work and thought she was doing it well enough, but one night found herself discharged. Walking dispiritedly home from the

street car, wondering how she should be able to tell her mother that the principal breadwinner of the family had lost her position, she espied ahead of her three girls whose acquaintance belonged to more prosperous days. They were Aline Sax, Jeannette Wieler, and Bertha Kopel. Sylvy hesitated, and would have avoided them but that Bertha Kopel had seen her first.

"Hello, kid!" was Bertha's greeting. "What you mopin' past like that for? Come in and get a soda."

Sylvy was too spiritless even to decline the invitation, so sat down in the drug store with the girls.

During the consumption of the soda she had time to look her companions over in detail. They were dressed far better than she and besides being awfully nice to her they were in exceedingly good spirits, making little jokes for her, laughing and talking about the pictures and the last vaudeville bill. Sylvy was almost awed by the spectacle of so much carefree happiness in the world.

"Gawd sake, but you're the cute kid, Sylvy," observed Aline, appearing to pause and study her face. "Put the right kind of a hat on you, and you'd look like a queen."

Sylvy did not know that this remark was by way of calling her attention to the fact that Aline herself wore a most charming creation of the milliner, a thing of beads, velvet, and ribbon, that must have cost all of \$14 and was as far above Sylvy's reach as a diamond tiara. Sylvy, however, secretly admired the hat and marvelled. Also she envied.

"Why wasn't her father able to give her a hat like that?" she reflected gloomily. He could if he wasn't all the time hanging round at meetings, instead of out making money.

"Swell figure, too," declared Bertha, pretending to eye Sylvy critically. "Put the right kind of clothes on you, girl, and you'd go by us like a hundred miles an hour."

Sylvy was embarrassed by the compliment. She

knew her dress was a rag compared to the gown that Bertha wore.

"And as for shoes and stockings! They sure do make a woman look well-dressed when she's got 'em, and they'll make a queen's robe shabby when she ain't got 'em," contributed Jeannette, to the further distress of Sylvy. Sylvy could not see Jeannette's feet, but she had not a doubt that they were wonderfully shod. As for her, she remembered the time she paid \$4 for a pair of shoes—\$4 out of the eight of her weekly wage—and the look her mother gave her and the harsh words her father spoke, asking if she would take the milk out of the children's glasses to put it on her shoes in pride, made her shiver even now.

Tears filled Sylvy's eyes. The ice cream stuck in her throat and she pushed the glass away from her.

"Why, if the child ain't cryin'," declared Aline.

"What do you make of that, girls?"

"No, I'm not," said Sylvy, stoutly. "Just thinking, that's all. You girls don't mean it, but you hurt me by your talk about clothes. I can't have clothes, the way things are with us, now. I don't think about it much only when somebody talks about them."

"Well, chirk up, chicken, nobody meant to hurt your feelin's," insisted Bertha, while all three faces expressed sympathy.

These girls had been playmates of Sylvy's. They affected to be much older, and they looked and acted much older, yet she knew, as a matter of fact, that it was only in the possession of better clothes and the leisure to enjoy them that they were older.

"It was kind of you to speak to me—and to have me in here, but I shouldn't have come," Sylvy said faintly. "It makes me discontented."

"Discontented? Say, girl! With that figure of yours, you don't ever need to work at all, and that face. You could outdress any of us." It was Aline speaking.

"Oh, I could dress if my father gave me the——"

"Say!" the girls interrupted her by laughing very loudly, and then they bent low over the table and, with blushes, giggles, and insinuating glances, they imparted to her that their fathers did not give them the clothes they wore.

Sylvy was dull of comprehension at first, but suddenly drew back with her face burning, her eyes on the table, unable to look at the girls again.

The girls, too, became subdued, as if the manner in which Sylvy had received their confidences had somehow hushed their over-strident spirits. After a little bit Aline paid the check from what Sylvy noticed was a well-filled purse, and all four went out, Sylvy making the first corner an excuse to escape from them.

"Good-bye, Sylvy," they chirruped. "Look us up sometime when you're blue!"

Sylvy, as if she had done a shameful thing, hurried homeward, to find her mother anxious and her father complaining bitterly that business with the pushcart was so bad.

Sylvy decided to postpone telling her mother she had been discharged till bedtime, and then she postponed it till morning. In the morning she postponed it again and went off to the car as usual, but this time to search for employment instead of finding it waiting for her.

Searching is easy, however, in these times, and before a quarter of the day was done she was packing hairpins in boxes. Discontent, however, grew upon the girl. Her fellow workers were coarse and unattractive. She was quiet and reserved amid such contacts; they misunderstood and twitted her with being stuck-up.

At home things were not much better. Her mother wore a dolorous air, and who could blame her? The children were affectionate but dirty, and they got on the sister's nerves. Her father was most exasperating of all, drifting more and more under the influence of Levene, and though she detested the Russian agitator utterly, it was hardly strange if the girl began to accept some of his ideas and to feel that the whole social fabric

was evil, that it must be destroyed utterly and a new start made. Something was wrong, she knew, or Maldono could not have turned her father into a mendicant merchant with a pushcart.

For the better part of a year things went on like this, disappointments merging into despair and despair into a kind of recklessness in which she was often frightened afterward by the thoughts that came to her in these spells. One of them was upon her at the close of a day in April as she dismounted from the car at South and Second streets and started mechanically toward home, only to bump into Bertha Kopel before going a dozen paces. Bertha, gazing idly and speculatively up and down the street, had marked the general air of indifference and abandon which characterized the girl's advance, and chirped cheerfully:

"Hello, Sylvy."

Sylvy recognized the girl and involuntarily shrank, but checked herself instantly. She was such a miserable failure herself. What right had she to shrink from any one? Besides—that philosophy of Levene's—what was dishonour for one might be noble virtue in another. It all depended upon circumstances and conditions. Sylvy had let many of her ideals slip in the last year. She let another go by the board as she responded in cordial tones, "Hello, Bertha!"

"Want to go to a dance to-night, kid?" There was undoubtedly something in Bertha's voice that attracted. It had a coaxing purr in it, and she was a warm-hearted, generous girl.

Sylvy smiled faintly, but shook her head, though somewhat indecisively.

"You do but you don't, eh?" divined Bertha, and assumed a motherly tone as she went on with: "Well, you just will. The White Lily Social's to-night and you're going to be there strong. You look tired out, though. Come to my room and have a rest. Then I can doll you up sufficient with some of my things, so's you won't have to go home."

With Bertha this was tact, for she doubted if the girl had clothes at home that would have made her presentable for a dance, but Sylvy confessed readily to weariness.

"I am tired Bertha. Tired of everything," she said drearily. "I would go home with you for an hour, just to put off going to my own."

"I get you, kid," responded Bertha. "I've had 'em myself, but I'm out for the eats now. I know a hole in the ground down here where you can feed like a millionairess for forty cents."

Forty cents! For one meal. Sylvy had heard of such extravagance, but never witnessed it.

"Oh, I couldn't," she objected, holding back.

"Sure you could, Sylvy. They're on me, you know," and Bertha threaded her hand through the tired girl's unresisting arm and led her to Kopezynski's.

Appetite and weakness triumphed over scruples. Sylvy ate the meal. It was a most amazing meal, stunning table d'hôte, all the way from soup to ice cream, and it tasted, oh, so good.

At first extremely self-conscious, Sylvy sat with eyes fixed on her plate or on Bertha's broad, rather coarse face, but with the progress of the meal, this shyness wore off. Venturing to look about her she saw many others dining as cheerfully as Bertha. There was music stimulus, too, as well as crowd stimulus. Soon she talked and laughed and tried to appear as happy as the others.

Once the memory of her mother waiting dinner for her struck her with a pang, and she spoke of it to Bertha.

"What does she want to wait for you for? That ain't love, that's selfishness. Makes you feel as if you ought to be there. You got to break away sometime, ain't you? You can't always be tied to her apron strings. Why not let this be the time?"

It was strange how skillfully Bertha succeeded in appealing to something in the girl that had been

smouldering, but had never yet flamed out in expression.

"I—I guess I will!" decided Sylvy.

At the end of the meal, Bertha paid for it, from a mass of crumpled dollar bills which she dug out of her bag, and tipped the waiter grandly to the extent of ten cents for each of them.

Sylvy marvelled at the affluence which could cast away twenty cents without so much as a backward look, as she marvelled at the gaudiness of the chain and locket about Bertha's neck, and at the thickness of colour she had dared to lay upon her cheeks.

"But—but don't you live at home?" inquired Sylvy in surprise, when they passed the mattress-making shop of Joseph Kopel, over which his family lived.

"Nopel Too slow for me there. Too much bossing, I got a room of my own."

Bertha turned in under a cheap transparent glass sign which read: "Rooms. Transient, thirty-five cents."

Bertha's room was up two flights of dimly lighted stairs and back along many yards of twisting, ill-ventilated corridors; but once gained proved surprisingly attractive. It was tiny and crowded, with no other open space than a mere aisle which served as passageway to the bed, to the trunk, to the dresser, and to a curtained off angle which suggested duty as a wardrobe.

But despite its littleness and cheapness, the lavish attentions of a feminine hand had made it appear almost luxurious. Be-ribboned shams marked the pillows, and picture post-cards fretted the edge of the mirror, wholesome tiny pictures, also decked with ribbons, and other didos of fancywork stuck on wherever attachment could be found, relieved the bareness of the walls.

"Wonderful!" voted Sylvy.

"Just flop!" directed Bertha, motioning toward the

bed. "Take off your shoes and give your feet a rest. I'll darn you a pair of my silk stockings."

Sylvy flopped.

The dance of the White Lily Social proved all that imagination had painted. Sylvy danced and danced. She laughed and laughed. She talked and talked. Her beauty came back to her. She sparkled and sparkled. She was the belle of the White Lily. She had never had such a good time. The feeling that her soul was in protest, that she was a rebel, that she was burning bridges and breaking with slavish traditions, increased the abandon with which she flung herself into the pleasures of the night. The principal refreshment served was beer. Between every dance, beer. Sylvy declined refreshment at first upon the ground that she did not care for beer. Later she partook of it upon the ground that the pleasures of her life had been few and she must miss none of them from now on. She danced more wildly, laughed more wildly after this at the things her partners whispered in her ear, more and more wildly till, looking over the foaming top of her glass, she saw that it was Maldono who had whispered to her.

Maldono! Had she been dancing with Maldono? How could she be, when he was in jail; but no, there he was, laughing at her, sitting beside her closer and closer, his dark eyes gloating until again she felt them crawling over her neck like spiders.

The look, the laugh, the leer of Maldono, the feel of his hand, reaching for and clasping hers, sobered Sylvy and she screamed, one piercing, terror-stricken shriek that turned the White Lily Social into turmoil—one shriek and then for Sylvy—blackness!

With Bertha bending over the fainting girl, the male effectives of the White Lily Social turned suddenly and fiercely on Maldono, Battling Reddy leading, reinforced by Pete Harmony, Nosy Hansen, Erny Mealey, Hump Rowan, Jack Dodge, and the three McCarthys—all first line shock-troops, as it were—fell

upon Maldono like a cavalry charge. He was there upon sufferance anyway, being a Deutsch leader, while the White Lily was a Carey organization.

At ten o'clock next morning, Sylvy came to in Bertha's bed with a furry tongue and a terrible pain in her head.

"Well, at last," commented the watching Bertha, shifting her gum and sighing as a great load of apprehension rolled off her shoulders.

"That wop, Maldono, must a slipped somethin' in your beer."

"Did I drink much beer?" she inquired remorsefully.

"About three thimblefuls; but don't never touch it again, girlic. You ain't got the head for it."

"I won't," said Sylvy humbly. "Mother will be wild with anxiety."

"Nope," adjudged Bertha. "I got wise and before the second dance was over sent Battling round to tell your mother you was goin' to stay with me last night; she ain't expectin' to see you till to-night. Spend the day here, and then go in like you came from work."

Sylvy had never found convenience in a lie.

"No!" she said, struggling to arise, "I'll go home now and tell her the truth—that I overslept myself and have probably lost my job in consequence. Then I'll have the rest of the day to hunt a new place."

"Sylvy," said Bertha at parting, "you didn't look right among the rest of us girls last night. I done wrong to take you. Cut it out. You're different from us."

"Thank you," said Sylvy, who, knowing of herself that she should never go that way again, was freshly humbled and shamed that Bertha should have had her own easy sensibilities outraged by the spectacle of herself in such an environment.

"Keep yourself cheered up and find a bunch of your own to run with," advised Bertha. "But for Gaw sake don't go round the streets lookin' like a walking

tombstone. That face of yours last night was enough to put the whole ward on the bum. You're liable to catch any kind of disease when you're that way. Keep yourself cheered up!"

Sylvy smiled in spite of herself. Seeing the girl brightening Bertha ventured to put a question founded solely upon curiosity.

"What did this bird, Maldono, say to you or do?" she asked, having in mind that single scream of terror which had broken up the dance.

"Why—nothing—that I remember. It was just that he stands for—for a terrible idea to me, and when I recognized him I screamed!"

"Well," opined Bertha dryly, "for standin' for that terrible idea, Mr. Maldono paid kind of high last night."

"I wonder how he got out of jail," said Sylvy with a shiver. "I shall be afraid to go on the streets."

"You can rest easy for about a month," consoled Bertha. "It'll take him that long to get out of the hospital."

"Did they—hurt him?"

"Did they? That bunch? How they missed killin' him is what they're a tryin' to figure out this mornin', the wop included."

CHAPTER XXV

THE BIG SISTERS

VICTOR ROLLINSON sat at his desk with the morning paper in his hand. He was rather stunned. The headline on a trifling item in the news had leaped out and struck him between the eyes. "Maldono pardoned," said the caption.

"Well, I'm damned," said Victor, and for a time was lost in thought. Then the lawyer's fist came slowly, ponderously, and impressively down upon the desk. It was the dramatization of a vaster blow aimed at Maldono and at the machine which claimed and protected Maldono as one of the rottenest among rotten cogs.

Then Rollinson turned to his morning mail. What interested him first was a long envelope with no business imprint in the corner, and bearing the postmark of Philadelphia. "Private and confidential" appeared above the address, which was why it came to the lawyer unopened. His glance at the first paragraph of the typewritten sheet which came out of the envelope was eager enough, but at the second paragraph he started, and thereafter literally scooped up the balance of the page with a single swoop of his eye.

"Did not go home?" he exclaimed in alarm. "Dancing! Beer—Maldono—a fight!" Victor shuddered and his drawn-out "O-o-oh!" had in it the note of a strong man's pain.

When the lawyer had read the report through again and then folded and locked it in a drawer of his desk with others exactly like it, he sat for a long time very still, with lines of anxious thought writing and rewriting

themselves upon his face. His was a mighty patience, but a situation had arisen in which the policy of patience threatened to fail. He had taken measures of which Sylvy did not know to insure her physical safety; even if she had not screamed there was a hand that would have throttled Maldono. But her moral, her spiritual safety was not so easily guaranteed.

An hour later a woman was in Rollinson's office. She was tall, dark, and plainly dressed, with large, brilliant eyes with an earnest desire to be helpful in them at the same time that they studied very critically the face of the lawyer.

"And so," Victor wound up the story he had been telling, "I have decided to appeal to you. Can't the Big Sisters throw an arm around this girl and rescue her from herself at the same time that they save her from the deteriorating influences of her family environment?"

"It can try," assured the caller, who was herself the biggest of all the Big Sisters. "We have a junior club very near here. I will try to save the girl."

"That is all I ask," said Rollinson, "that and that the truth I have so frankly told to you shall be regarded as a personal confidence, of which no doubt you have many. I had to tell you in order to explain frankly my interest in Sylvy. To be still more frank, I shall have to tell you that I hesitate at neither the barriers of race nor religious prejudice. Love is bigger than race. It is broader than any sectarian religion. When a way can be found to tell this girl of my love for her without jeopardizing the success of my courtship I shall tell it. I shall seek to win her as any man seeks to win the object of his love. If I succeed and if she will dare so much, no power on earth will keep me from marrying her."

It was inevitable that the woman should be impressed by the sincerity and conscientiousness of the lawyer, but the tenacity of that lady's own convictions was revealed in her answer.

"I will try to save the girl," she said again and earnestly, "but it will be a part of that duty to warn her against what is in your heart."

"But not until my heart has found an opportunity of revealing itself to her?" urged the lawyer.

"I will be as chivalrous as you—yes. I agree to that," she said and hurried away.

Sylvy, frightened into contrition, had taken up the old dreary round again. But contritions cannot last forever, and after a few weeks of alarms the old despairs and recklessnesses were taking hold of her again, when, one night as she dawdled homeward, Rosalie Steinharter, another acquaintance of better days, but a young woman of far finer stamp than Bertha Kopel, hailed her with:

"Sylvy! Would you like to meet at my house tonight with two other girls and knit for the Jewish soldiers and sailors?"

"I don't know how to knit," demurred Sylvy, truthfully enough, but rather ungraciously.

"We can teach you in five minutes," persisted Rosalie stoutly.

"The yarn?" objected Sylvy, thinking of the cost.

"It comes from the committee."

"I'm afraid I couldn't," decided Sylvy, but all the while she was objecting and demurring, she was being attracted by the idea. It promised delightful occupation and companionship instead of a dull evening at home; while the mere prospect of being connected with all this mighty work of war relief gave her a thrill.

"Please do," urged Rosalie.

"I will try to come over," relented Sylvy.

After supper, taking good care not to let the occasion of her going be known to her father who was opposed to this war and to all war except that mighty Armageddon of the masses against the classes of which he now dreamed day and night, she stole out.

Needles also were furnished, and soon Sylvy was having her first knitting lesson. The other three

knitters were what were known in the neighbourhood as "nice" girls. Being invited to join them rather emphasized the fact that Sylvy was also known as a nice girl. She was soon feeling very much at home and the evening slipped by like magic. In two hours Sylvy had knitted a few uneven inches on a scarf, but it seemed to the lonesome girl as if she had knitted yards and yards of the strong, even texture of a fine new sort of life. Happier still, she was allowed to take her knitting home, and thereafter had something to do on the street cars, when lucky enough to get a seat, as she rode to and from her work.

The next week there were eight girls instead of four, and the third week there was some sort of meeting, with one of the girls acting as president; but—canny, canny Big Sisters—it was but very, very gradually that the fact and purpose of the organization were permitted to dawn upon Sylvy. When at last all these fine things that had been coming into her life had been given a name, the girl's every scruple and possible objection had been skillfully overwoven and she took to being a "little sister" with naturalness and enthusiasm.

The last and greatest gift of the organization to Sylvy was that of her own "big sister," Hester Levy. Hester was a tall quiet girl, with topaz eyes and hair of raven blackness. She dressed unostentatiously, was wisely tactful, and won Sylvy's confidence and love by the simple process of speedily coming to love the girl for her own sake. Between the two not a formal, but an actual friendship sprang up, and in the course of this Hester rather overstepped Big Sister rules—framed to guard against exciting discontent and envy—by inviting Sylvy to visit her in her own home.

It had not occurred to Sylvy that Hester was more than well-to-do, and she was astonished to find her living in a mansion on Rittenhouse Square. Its spaciousness, its servants, its furnishings awed the girl, noticing which Hester quickly snatched her away to the greater simplicity of her own room; but here, again,

the signs of opulence, though subdued, were unescapable. The honest Sylvy made no attempt to disguise her impressions.

"Rich! . . . Rich!" she murmured in astonishment, and then turning her large, wondering eyes from the texture of things about her to the half-amused face of the gentle Hester, exclaimed abruptly:

"Why, you are so kind and nice! Why do you bother about us poor girls if you are so rich?"

"Should not the rich be kind?" asked Hester, startled by the girl's naïveté.

Sylvy was confused. Her mind went back to all the things Levene had said to her father and all the things her father himself had repeated, and realized that she had unconsciously accepted them as true.

"But are you so very rich?" the girl inquired, with sudden hope that those surroundings which seemed so splendrous to her inexperience might indicate less wealth than they seemed to; but Hester had to disappoint her.

"I am afraid we are—very, very rich," confessed the Big Sister with a smile. "My father owns stores in New York and Philadelphia."

"Stores? Are you that—that Levy? I work in their button factory. I—I help to make your money."

Hester flushed and Sylvy realized this was a tactless thing to have said. "And so kind to us—us wage-earners," the girl blundered on, still under the spell of some of Levene's phrases.

At this Hester, half-amused and half-vexed, promptly took up the cudgels on behalf of maligned and unappreciated wealth.

"Why, the richest girl I know—the richest girl in Philadelphia, is the kindest, the most impulsively warm-hearted and considerate creature you could imagine," Hester argued. "She lives right over there. See! In the big, big house. We are very dear friends. Would you like to run over and meet her?"

"No! Oh, no!" exclaimed Sylvy, shrinking from the encounter with any more magnificence.

But Hester saw in her "Little Sister" a dangerous and unjust misconception that might be entirely corrected if she could put in living evidence the good-heartedness of Ruth Buckingham.

"Excuse me a moment, Sylvy," she said, determined upon strategy, and tripping downstairs gave some instructions to the butler. If Ruth would only happen to be home now, she thought, hurrying back.

It could not have been five minutes till light feet were bounding up the stairway and hurrying over a familiar route along the hall, while a voice of irrepressible eagerness began to call: "Hester, oh, Hester." A moment later a blue-eyed young woman with a wide straw hat slung by ribbons from her arm and wearing a simple dress of gauzy white was standing in the door.

"Ruth," announced Hester, advancing delightedly, "I was just boasting about you."

"Boasting?"

"Yes; this is one of my dearest friends, Sylvy Aurent-sky."

"Sylvy!" Ruth cried in mingled amazement and bubbling joy. "At last!"

Catching the girl by her two hands, she held her off for admiring inspection—the hair, the eyes, the lips—then drew her to her and kissed her, exclaiming:

"Oh, you dear! You are all—all that Jerry said."

"Jerry?" exclaimed Hester, rather taken back at this apparent recognition of her little friend from the Ghetto.

"Why, yes," explained Ruth, still beaming, "my friend Mr. Archer! You see, Sylvy," for it seemed to her that explanation was due, "your name has been a household word for a long time—at least a household word between two people."

"I don't understand," said Sylvy, embarrassed by the warmth of Ruth's greeting, but unable to feel the least bit in awe of her—inclined rather to love her on



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sight for being so girlishly natural and affectionate without the least bit patronizing.

"That isn't strange," admitted Ruth frankly, "for you can't have any idea what you are doing, Sylvy. Why, you are engaged in turning Philadelphia upside down at this very minute. Men are at work in every part of the city, burrowing and planting political dynamite, and some day a certain somebody will touch a button, and, pouf! there will go your old political machine. All blown to junk like the German machine at Messines! The man who robbed your father has been sent to jail once and is on his way there again; but oh, there are so many others to be punished, so many wrongs to be righted, and changes for the better to be made—and you are at the bottom of it all," declared Ruth, delightfully breathless and incomprehensible.

"Why, you seem to know all about me," protested Sylvy, flushing slightly; "but yet I cannot think what you mean."

"Couldn't you break it to us a little more—more consecutively, Ruth dear?" reproached Hester gently, beginning to be alarmed lest something be said or done that would make the petals of Sylvy's sensitive pride curl up tightly again, thus undoing all the careful sunning which the Big Sisters had been engaged in for months.

"But it's so sudden. It's so unexpected, meeting Sylvy here—I can hardly put it all together straight," apologized Ruth. "Besides, it may be giving away a grave political secret. But do you remember, Sylvy, when Mr. J. T. Archer was assaulted by a policeman down in the Fifth Ward and you went up and thanked him for intervening in behalf of a little storekeeper?"

"Yes," said Sylvy, recalling Mr. Archer with a slight guilty feeling, because when later he had come to offer her help like a true friend, she had been obliged to send him away.

"That impulsive little act of yours won Mr. Archer's admiration," Ruth exclaimed. "He raved about you

to me, and, well, you have just been a kind of inspiration to Mr. Archer ever since. Because there was one girl like you in the Fifth Ward, he was determined that it should be made a safe place for every girl, and for children and babies, too—for everyone, in fact. You have heard about his cutting streets through, about the new parks and playgrounds he's been working at?"

Sylvy, dazed and but dimly conscious whether she had or not, nodded politely.

"Well, all the time—in everything, his watchword has been—Sylvy Aurenstsky!"

"Isn't that complimentary!" exclaimed Hester, herself half-stifled with surprise, but trying to steady and reassure Sylvy.

"And now," said Ruth, lowering her voice with a sense of the importance of the matter. "He's doing something ever and ever so much bigger and more important than that, and still the watchword is—'For Sylvy Aurenstsky.'"

Hester, watching anxiously the effect of this on Sylvy, lest it frighten or offend her, was relieved to see that instead it filled the dark eyes with a kind of glory of surprise and satisfaction.

"So you see what an important person you've been all the time," laughed Hester, hugging Sylvy ecstatically.

"Oh, it leaves me breathless," gasped the girl. "But isn't all this somehow your work? Didn't the Big Sisters?"—and Sylvy's face became eloquent with a wonderful expression of trust and gratitude—"I begin to suspect you Big Sisters of being at the back of every thing good that happens."

"No," smiled Hester. "I do not think that you can credit the Big Sisters with that," and then she turned to Ruth with, "But don't you think it is strange, Ruth, if Mr. Archer was so interested in Sylvy that he didn't try to do something for them when he knew that this Maldono of whom you speak had robbed her father?"

"He did," confessed Sylvy quickly. "He came to our—our house one night, but papa—papa was so distressed by what had happened that he wasn't himself, and he just the same as drove Mr. Archer away. I told him to go myself. And it was after that I grew more discouraged and hopeless. Until the Big Sisters found me or I found the Big Sisters, I don't know which it was, not one single ray of light came to me except once."

"And what was that?" inquired Hester, eager to hold the girl in this self-disclosing mood.

"A man—a lawyer, but oh! the most wonderful man in Philadelphia!"

"Jerry is the most wonderful man in Philadelphia," interjected Ruth in all seriousness.

Sylvy smiled.

"You're confessing something, aren't you?" observed Hester, mischievously.

"To you two girls I don't mind confessing it," owned Ruth naïvely, "but otherwise it's the greatest secret in the world—so grave that if my father and mother knew of it, for instance, why, something dreadful might happen."

"Aren't you just a girl like the rest of us, though, Ruth, to go blabbing like that?" This was Hester's remark, of course.

"I've been bursting to tell someone besides Aunt Stella," admitted Ruth, with a happy blush.

Hester smiled indulgently, black eyes aglow with admiration for the picture Ruth made, her face all animation and colour. So far as Sylvy was concerned, this confession of woman's dearest secret was the last thing that could have been done to make her lose her head completely to that young woman's charms.

"But about the wonderful man, Sylvy?" Hester reminded gently.

"A lawyer," replied the girl, her face lighting. "Mr. Victor Rollinson. There was an elevator accident in the factory where I worked, and Mr. Rollinson was hearing about it from the witnesses. I was one of

them. Mr. Rollinson's voice was very gentle but strong. It seemed to me that he was the strongest, grandest, gentlest man in the world. At first he talked to me impersonally, just like I was nobody, and then it seemed to me his manner changed and he treated me as if I were the grandest lady in the world. Just treating me that way made me feel that way, too—while it lasted. For just a moment, no, for half an hour, while he talked to me, the world seemed a bright, happy, wonderful place; but then I went outside and back to work and home at night to the miserable hole we have had to call a home and to find father worse than usual—and I knew there wasn't any hope for anything."

"And have you thought of Mr. Rollinson since?"

"Twice since I had to go to his office again to talk about the accident, and each time he was nicer than before, and so kind, and asked me how I was getting on, and if he could do anything for me. I told him 'fine,' and 'no, he couldn't.' Once more he sent for me and I didn't go because—because I was afraid to have him ask me that again."

"Sylvy," said Ruth, very soberly, "at the risk of being a busybody, I'm going to tell you something. Victor Rollinson fell in love with you that first day."

"Love?" gasped Hester.

"In love?" Sylvy's own eyes widened and rounded in an expression of incomprehensibility, but her hand made a little involuntary movement toward her breast, which did not escape the eyes of either of the other two girls.

"He loves you now, reverently, worshipfully, and unselfishly—as a strong, noble nature like his would love," went on Ruth.

"He loves me?" asked Sylvy again, and now she was pressing one hand hard against her breast.

"Yes; he has not spoken yet because he was afraid of frightening you, or being misunderstood; but he has never given up hoping. He is not a man who gives up. He has watched over you night and day since.

It was he, you know, that put Maldono in jail. He thought then that you might come and thank him as you had thanked Jerry. He hoped, he waited, I expect he prayed for you to come. What a weak thing a big man like that becomes when he is in love! And he has watched over you every hour since."

"Watched over me? I don't understand," said Sylvy in tones of bewilderment.

"Yes," averred Ruth. "There was a man that was employed always in the same room with you in the factories and places where you have worked. He was there to protect you if you ever needed protection. There was another man who rode to and from your work upon the same car with you, who saw you leave home in the morning and saw you back into it at night."

Sylvy was almost humbled by this surprising assurance of a great, patient, all-considering love on the part of the lawyer. There was an exchange of glances between Hester and Ruth, and the latter continued with:

"One night you did not go home."

"Mr. Rollinson knew that?" Sylvy asked, flushing scarlet.

"Yes. But his protection guarded you as carefully that night as if you had been at home. Yet he was alarmed. The next day the Big Sisters——"

"The Big Sisters did find me, then, and not I them?" exclaimed Sylvy, turning quickly to Hester.

Hester hesitated a moment, rather frightened, but Ruth trod on more surely.

"I know that Mr. Rollinson sent for the biggest of all the Big Sisters and asked her aid."

"In his love affair?" demanded Hester, critically.

"Not at all!" disclaimed Ruth, shrewdly. "In protecting Sylvy from harm."

"And I owe you to him!" said Sylvy, clutching at Hester. "Oh, you and the Junior girls—you have meant everything to me. You have saved me from

the most awful despairs. You have given me hope—even for father. And I owe it all to Mr. Rollinson."

The girl's sense of gratitude was pathetic, and she was very near to giving way to tears, but rallied after a moment.

"It—it's a good deal to learn all in one afternoon," she apologized seriously, "when for a whole year I have been hating everybody who was not at least as poor and unfortunate as myself."

"But it has made you happy to know it all, hasn't it?" inquired Ruth.

"Yes," said Sylvy, her small bosom heaving, "though it's rather—rather humbling. But oh!" and her face filled with an expression that mingled sympathy and gratitude. "I'm troubled about Mr. Rollinson. Someone should tell him. He should know better than to love me." Looking very pale and white and helpless, Sylvy turned over her hands with a gesture characteristic of her race, and which expressed her sense of the eternal fixedness of things.

"But you will let him come to you now and be nice to you, as other girls' lovers are, and let him tell you of his love," urged Ruth, who was just now a very prejudiced advocate of love and its rights.

Sylvy's face was whiter, and she passed a small hand across her eyes.

"It would be useless," she murmured, desperately.

"It would be sin!" declared Hester, sternly, doubtful whether Ruth should have told so much.

"But you'll let me be your friend, as Hester is, and come to see you?" inquired Ruth, eagerly.

"As Hester is?" and Sylvy looked into her tall, Big Sister's face with devotion in her eyes, as if no one could aspire to be quite such a friend as Hester was.

"I should like to be friends with you, though," admitted Sylvy, looking at Ruth wistfully.

"And let me come to see you?"

Sylvy shook her head. "Only Hester comes to see me. If you saw how we live, my pride could never

let me look at you again. And you mustn't try to do anything for me. The Big Sisters will help me, you know. But if we could meet and just be interested in each other as—as girls, you know—but, of course, that's impossible. Oh, no, we couldn't be friends."

"It's perfectly possible," declared the practical Ruth, with assumption of great wisdom. "We have interests in common. Men love us. You think Victor Rollinson is the most wonderful man in Philadelphia. I think Jerry Archer is. So, there's a starting point. And let me tell you another political secret—a very secret political secret—'graveyard' they call it. Jerry says he's going to make Victor Rollinson the next Mayor of Philadelphia."

Sylvy's eyes sparkled.

"That would prove he was wonderful, wouldn't it?" she demanded, quickly.

"Who? Jerry?" inquired Ruth, innocently, to join a moment later in the laugh at her expense which Hester had.

And all three of them could afford to laugh, for it seemed as if at last that strange conjunction of events which somewhere along may be counted upon to help in the affairs of men and love had begun to arrive and manifest itself.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE POWERS TAKE NOTICE

BUT a year in the life of Sylvy Aurentsky had been also a year in the life of Jeremiah Thomas Archer, a year in which he divided himself pretty evenly between three things, viz.: driving his end of the business of the Archer Tool Works, trying to persuade Miss Ruth Buckingham to marry him at once and leave eventualities to take care of themselves, and labouring to build up a political organization to wrest the Republican City Committee from its present iniquitous control. In the first he was entirely successful as usual; in the second he was unsuccessful but still buoyed up by delicious hopes; in the third there was no way as yet of measuring his success, except by a growing perturbation in the ranks of the old machine. Jerry's workers brought him word of this and it thrilled him with delight.

As a matter of fact, the Big Boss had, many months before, noticed some mysterious force burrowing about down in the ruck of things, where the mass of voters live, and had paused long enough to note the source from which these burrowings proceeded. When he found it to be a group of fanatical reformers, supported by millionaires, he sniffed, sneered, and all but forgot; for this was one part of the game that politicians knew reformers could not play.

Yet, now when the city campaign was but a few weeks off, the Big Boss was chagrined to find that a workable counter-organization had been effected and ensconced in concrete-lined trenches and bomb-proof dugouts on a line that extended from the river to the hills, through

every division and every ward—an organization, moreover, which openly boasted itself dyed-in-the-wool Republican and muttered of its intentions to select a list of Republican candidates for nomination at the September primaries.

"I'm damned," said the Big Boss, and conferred anxiously with the middle-sized bosses; so that by and by the scouts and outriders of the machine began to come in with more detailed information. The Big Boss, a very astute and a very relentless man, took this information off by himself and excogitated upon it. As he ruminated his eyes gleamed with a crafty light and he stroked his chin complacently, while a malicious smile photographed itself upon his lips. He had thought of a thing that he could do to the voters of Philadelphia; yes, he had definitely decided upon a coup. Or, to employ the political patois apt to the situation, he had decided upon a switch. In the prize ring the manoeuvre is known as the double-cross. *And the people were to be on the receiving end of the double-cross.*

Very soon after the Big Boss reached this decision, he and Willard H. Buckingham were closeted together.

"There's hell to pay," said the politician, affecting an air of gravity. "A flock of fool millionaires are putting up the coin, and it's astonishing the bunch of workers, good, practical, live-wire workers that young fellow Archer has got hooked up—not a dead one among 'em. And say! there's a kind of a damned religion of enthusiasm about the way they're gittin' along. They feel like regular crusaders. Why, blast it, with that organization and all this everlasting yawping in the newspapers, they might come through and beat us out."

"Might?" Mr. Buckingham was at times chary of words, but the glare in his eyes was the more voluble.

"Blast it, they will; that's all there is to it; they will."

A frown indented itself deeply between Mr. Buckingham's eyes.

"Who's their man for Mayor?"

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

271

"Archer's candidate is Victor Hollinson, but the organization's candidate is Archer himself."

"Jerry Archer? For Mayor?" The rumble of wrath at such undesirable absurdity was loud in Mr. Buckingham's tones.

"For Mayor? Why not?" inquired the Boss. "He's young, he's clean, he's spectacular, he's likable, and he's a driving vote-getting kind of a fellow."

Mr. Buckingham was silent, his lips struggling with each other in the tightness of their compression.

"What's your plan?" he inquired sharply, after an interval of contemplation of one of the most distasteful possibilities that had been spread before him in some time.

All the gravity departed from the face of the Big Boss. He snickered at the simple beauty of his plan.

"Let 'em elect him, if they can, and then we'll take him into camp. We'll put up a man, of course, and try to win. If we do, all right; but probably we won't. This town insists on electing a reform mayor about once in a dozen years anyway. It'll be easier, probably, and better to let the wave of reform roll over us, and then while they're hollering victory and holding ratification meetings, we'll just open the door and let their mayor come in with us."

"But what makes you think you can take Archer into camp?" Mr. Buckingham was respectfully interested.

"That," said the Boss, with an insinuating grin, "is what I came to talk to you about. Young Archer is pretty close to some of your family, I understand, and—every man has his price."

"Not every man!" rebuked Buckingham with a scowl, recalling one or two unpleasant experiences. "And let me tell you something right now. I have less influence with Jeremiah T. Archer on political matters than with any man in Philadelphia."

"And anyway"—Mr. Buckingham grew excitedly emphatic to the point where his face reddened and the veins stood out on his forehead—"I don't want

to have any hare-brained reform administration to deal with next year. There are too many issues at stake, railroad matters, matters of bonds, matters of bank deposits, matters of—oh, all sorts of projects pending. They make it important that investigations and trials and furores and mare's nests of every sort shall not be stirred up by meddlings of long-haired political theorists.

"A reform administration means freak commissions, freak legislation, freak actions; you never know what the city is going to do with those fellows at the wheel and investors never know where they are. You find men on committees and men in charge of departments that are unreasonable and hard to deal with. I know what it was like in the Blankenburg administration; men like George D. Porter—too damned honest; George W. Norris, able, high-minded gentleman—but—too high-minded. And then there was that little fellow, Morris Cooke. Why, blast him, he could stir up more suspicion and public dissatisfaction in one day than all of us together could settle in a year. They are all so conscientious they think everybody else must be a thief. The total effect is that they—unsettle values."

Mr. Buckingham, after a moment's hesitance, came out with this final phrase and stopped, apparently willing to let it go at that. In it he had put the whole truth. Mr. Buckingham's entire objection to reform administrations could be truthfully summed up in that. They unsettled values; that was his fixed idea. He was not a corruptionist; he dealt not in political favours. A business of crime, like Maldono's; thieving contracts that looted the City Treasury, venal advantage in the courts—all such Mr. Buckingham utterly contemned. He had no personal knowledge of such things and preferred to doubt their existence.

Politically, his creed was summed up in opposition to change. He felt himself to be an advocate permanently retained in favour of the status quo and of the status quo ante. It was this that made him the

ally of a Mayor for whom he veiled his contempt but thinly and every machine to which the Mayor belonged. They did nothing to unsettle values, and Mr. Buckingham wanted values to be absolutely steady except when he could know in advance that they were going to be joggled, and just how and how much.

At such times he was sure to be standing around with buckets to catch whatever of increment was spilled over; and the amazing thing was that the values so salvaged nearly always belonged to Mr. Buckingham personally, while the values that had been joggled would nearly always be partnership values, corporation values, trustee values or, in some cases, municipal values. Yes, that was the way Mr. Buckingham was gradually getting things arranged in Philadelphia, so that whatever happened, profits were made for himself: but this could only be when he handled the levers. If some other, some alien hand was thrust in—one of these progressive-minded men like those who had so many ideas one couldn't always be sure where they were going to break out next—why, then Mr. Buckingham couldn't be sure of anything—and the very genius of high finance is that it is sure. The chance is taken by the other fellow.

The Big Boss smiled at Mr. Buckingham's tirade against reformers. He heartily approved of it and could have added several paragraphs to the record and in far more picturesque phrase than Mr. Buckingham permitted himself to employ. However, here was a practical issue to be dealt with, and it confronted, in the financier's disclaimer of influence with Jeremiah, a difficulty that, so far as the Big Boss was concerned, was entirely unlooked for. It caused his smile to fade, and his expression of gravity to return and grow into a worried air.

"Why, I understood, Mr. Buckingham," said the Big Boss, delicately, ingratiatingly, insinuatingly, "I understood that young Archer was practically engaged to your daughter."

"Absurd!" snapped the banker. "Utterly absurd! There was a time when I looked upon him with favour; but not for a year; not since I began to see what his bent really was." Now it was like the autocrat Mr. Buckingham was that he failed to take into account that maybe his daughter's feeling for young Archer had not followed the curve of her father's emotional reactions into a reverse movement.

"Likely young fellow for a son-in-law," mused the Big Boss, peering out from under hairy brows to note the effect of this before going on with: "If he was engaged to her now, my plan would be perfectly good."

Mr. Buckingham butted his head savagely into the air at this suggestion so calculatingly planted.

"Oblige me," he said hotly, "by leaving my family out of your computations. They are not to be rated as a political asset of yours or anybody's else. If you have let young Archer build himself into power right under your nose, you have been asleep."

"Well, he's a power all right," frowned the Big Boss.

"Then he must be killed off—politically, you understand."

"It's easy, if you want to do it, but he's a pretty figure of a man to kill, blamed if he ain't."

"Easy? How?" Mr. Buckingham was both eager and scornful.

"That little Jewess I told you of. Her father is in some kind of a jam. Money would get her to talk. Or rather, money would induce her to keep still, and that's all we would ask. We could do the talking."

Mr. Buckingham's fine features mantled with an expression of elegant distaste, as he responded to this suggestion with a negative shake of his head.

"Besides," he averred, "that story was utterly false."

"I had a suspicion it might be," said the Boss; "but it's just as good ammunition."

"You are utterly conscienceless," protested Mr. Buckingham with a lofty air.

"I never noticed you having so much conscience when you want a thing done."

"Nol Nol Nol" stormed Mr. Buckingham, pacing up and down the room. "Anything like that is very repulsive to me. The young man must be killed off politically—but nicely, you understand, nicely. Painlessly, almost, if that is possible. But it must be done. He must never become Mayor of Philadelphia. He is young, he is audacious, he has no respect for traditions or authority. He has an almost revolutionary mind; and he would attempt to put his ideas in practice. I have tried to reason with him on several occasions and it cannot be done."

"Say, Buckingham," suggested the Big Boss ironically. "If it's to be such a damned nice job, suppose you let the blood out of his veins yourself."

"I will," he said fiercely, "since you have let this man grow until he is dangerous, I will attend to the matter myself. You can get me a list of his principal supporters, I suppose."

"I can get you a copy of his receipts for last month," said the Boss coolly, showing that spies and stool pigeons may as easily be planted in the camp of reform as elsewhere.

"Do so!" said Mr. Buckingham, and dismissed the Big Boss by the mere turning of his back.

For a time now, therefore, the conduct of the war against Jeremiah Thomas Archer was in Mr. Buckingham's own hands, and it would see employed those weapons and that form of strategy which the financier knew best how to use. Within twenty-four hours the promised list of Jerry's contributors was in hand. It included, besides the rich men of the angel chorus, some comparatively small fish, little cashiers and clerks and tellers, floorwalkers, mill foremen, and the like—for Jerry was trying to popularize his movement and succeeding. As the Big Boss had told Mr. Buckingham—there was getting to be a kind of a fanatical enthusiasm about it.

Yet not the least of these contributors was too small

to escape the notice of Mr. Buckingham. One by one, and usually through the financial authorities directly over them, they were singled out for warning. For instance, the head of a great department store was told that certain of his employees were guilty of pernicious political activity and that he would be held personally responsible at the gateway of his banking credits if these employees of his did not withdraw their support from Jeremiah Archer's pestiferous enterprise.

The big head of the big department store bowed his neck meekly and obeyed as Mr. Buckingham expected to be obeyed. The same sort of instructions were issued to banks, and to other institutions whose employees had become tinctured with Archerism as, in supreme disgust, the financiers called it. At the same time, Mr. Buckingham had been sending for the big fish, the millionaires who were the main support of Jerry's movement.

Not all of these men were in active business; not all of them were in need of credits at the places where Mr. Buckingham's control of credits was absolute; some of them had their money soaked away in real estate, or invested in the kind of bonds and stocks that not even Mr. Buckingham's power could make to tremble. To some, therefore, of Jerry's angel chorus Mr. Buckingham gave terse orders, to others only polite intimations, while with still others he reasoned, gently at first, and then more emphatically. Where some openly scorned, he threatened, as he had threatened the department store man.

It remains but to record that Mr. Buckingham's faith in tactics of this sort was immediately vindicated. A word to the wise is usually quite sufficient in Philadelphia, and the flow of money to Jerry's political coffers was straightway cut in half; that is, it was cut in half until three men on his finance committee who could neither be cajoled nor browbeaten into obeying Mr. Buckingham had time to survey the situation and to say to Jerry:

"Go on! You're drawing blood. We'll make up the deficit ourselves."

"For how long?" asked Jerry.

"For as long as you need it."

Knowing that these gentlemen could, for the rest of their lives, support his party organization without being impoverished thereby, the young leader smiled at the three of them, one of his broadest, most toothful smiles, and they slapped Jerry on the back.

"Go to it," they said. "The fight looks good to us."

But about this time the head of the big department store was back to Mr. Buckingham.

"I never had such an experience in my life," he said.

"Gently, but firmly, these men tell me that their money is their own; that they will not cease to subscribe to Mr. Archer's political organization."

This indicated the grip Archer's movement was getting upon the citizens. The spirit of insistence upon better things was stirring in the minds of the common man. The workman—the worm—was about to turn. According to Levene's point of view the worm was about to become a spreading adder and to hiss and plant fiery fangs. But in Jerry's programme the worm was only called upon to turn.

"Discharge them!" snapped Mr. Buckingham to the store proprietor.

"They are among my best men. My competitors will immediately grab them up."

"Let me know who picks them up and they will be discharged again."

"Willard," said the merchant—and he was a man eminent enough that he might presume to call Mr. Buckingham by his first name—"if you have as much power as that, don't you think you ought to be chary about using it?"

"I am chary about using it," answered Mr. Buckingham sententiously.

"But this is ruthless," urged the merchant.

"The time has come for ruthlessness," declared Mr.

Buckingham without the batting of an eye. The merchant batted several eyes, but after all went meekly to his disagreeable task.

It must be recorded, however, that the number of these humbler supporters of Jerry's Real Republican movement, who refused stubbornly to be choked off, was small—just enough to unfurl another banner of hope and encouragement—for in the main his contributors of lesser rank heeded the warnings that came down to them and cancelled their subscriptions. The habit of timidity, of docility, was too old and too firmly fixed to be cast off at once; but for all of that the effect on them was rather bad than good from Mr. Buckingham's standpoint. It offended them; it cut into their flesh. It assured them that the good Government cause was right; that Jerry's campaign was needed, if their sons after them were not to be the slaves of a combination of predatory machine and plutocratic wealth; so that down at the root the organization was stronger than before, for the money still came from the three millionaires and there were hundreds of little fans fanning the breath of rebellion.

Mr. Buckingham could not discern that, however; he only discerned from what the Big Boss told him that the Real Republicans continued to grow in numbers and in efficiency.

"I've got to get young Archer," he decided wrathfully.

The first step was to send for his chief credit man and to give him orders. Thereafter, during the forenoon, the credit men of certain other institutions came in and conferred with Mr. Buckingham, bringing little transcripts of bills receivable with them.

These transcripts were passed out to Mr. Buckingham's credit men, and about 2 o'clock a chart was laid on the great man's desk, blocked off in columns, with due dates at the heads of the columns and items in the thousands of dollars strung along across the pages, their total increasing with every column till the last

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

279

footing showed an item of more than \$700,000, and the date at the head of that last column was not so many weeks off, while any of the dates were very much nearer the present.

Mr. Buckingham looked at this statement and rubbed his hands.

"Get Jerry Archer in here," he said to his secretary.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BLOOD-RED DREAM

SYLVY went home from Hester's finally and completely reconstructed. All in an hour the last vestiges of that bitter brooding and gloom which for a year had threatened to engulf her soul had been blown away forever. Once and for all events had demonstrated that life is essentially good. Here were two daughters of the rich—and one of the princely rich—both of whom had proved themselves her disinterested friends.

Ruth Buckingham had shared a woman's most precious secret with her and had flattered her immensely by telling her that she was the inspiration of Mr. Jeremiah T. Archer in that great work of reform in Philadelphia upon which he was pictured as being so ardently bent. Greatest, most wonderful of all, was the astounding assurance that through all these months of her despair Victor Rollinson had loved her and been watching over and protecting her like an omniscient angel.

"God is in the world," the girl murmured to herself, "the same as when Ruth went out to glean in the fields of Boaz."

The whole experience gave her a strange sort of thrill, and a new sense of security as of unseen elements playing around and battling for her. It gave her hope—for herself, for her father, for all of them. The bareness, the signs of privation, all that feeling of struggle and want which pervaded the atmosphere of those stuffy little rooms in which the Aurentskys lived was powerless to smother this new and amazing elation in her breast.

Becky Aurenstky, watching patiently by the bedside of little Isadore, was almost lifted out of her anxiety at the sight of the look on her daughter's face.

"Ach, my child," she broke out excitedly: "Is it that you should go back to high school again, you look so happy?"

"No, mother; work—still work," smiled the girl, "but, oh, I feel so, so different. I've had such a wonderful Sunday afternoon. There are such good people in the world, after all. Yes, work—still work, mother, but no longer work without hope. I see a light."

"Ach! the blessed child!" sobbed the mother, crying for very joy over this change in her eldest born. "Come here, Sylvy! I want you should sit here and smile by little Isadore. I get the supper. We got your father's favourite to-night—gefullte-fish."

Sylvy, wielding a fan and smiling by the side of little Isadore's tossing form, tried to bring the light of interest to his fever-burning eyes with a story of the brightness of Rittenhouse Square, with the children on the grass and the birds amid the trees. But all the while she was thinking of what had happened, and of what might yet happen, and reflecting that she could never again be the daughter of her father's prejudices and suspicions.

"Father," she said, when he came in that night, "I want to talk to you all alone, and I want you to listen to me. I must tell you something."

When the dinner was over she dragged him into the privacy of the smaller bedroom, which, indeed, was all the privacy their home afforded.

"Father," she began with shining eyes. "I am so happy!"

"Happy!" snapped the foot-weary peddler.

"Happy! How should the poor be happy?"

"Because they are loved."

"Pah! Who loves them!"

With what skill and diplomacy were at her command, Sylvy told him the story of the Big Sisters, and what they had done for her.

"Pah! I heard of dem. What they vant mitt you—nothing, but your money. Vell, you ain't got no money."

"They love me with sister's love," explained the girl, "and I love them. They—they saved me, father!" And this time there was a note in her voice that made even the absorbed and embittered Aurentsky sit up and take notice of its meaning, but——

"It is your fadder dat saves you," he grumbled, "by keeping a roof over your head and a bed dat you should sleep in, while he vears out his feets on de cobblestones."

"And you have friends, too, father. Rich friends!" persisted the girl, refusing to let her new spirit be quenched. She then went on to tell how Mr. Archer, the young man who had called to see him more than a year ago, had, despite her father's churlish refusal of coöperation, persevered until his friend, Victor Rollinson, had sent Maldono to jail.

"Yes? For me dey do dot?" inquired Aurentsky, brightening. "I dun't know dem. For why dey do it?" The brightness went away and Jacob's eyes filled with quick suspicion and his lips curled with nasty sarcasm. "For why? What dey vant of me? I got nothing. I got no moneys. I got no votes, efen, any more. Only police clubs and blackjacks can vote in Philadelphia."

"They would have made Maldono give back your money if you had only listened, if you had helped them," reproached Sylvy.

Aurentsky started up fiercely.

"What I vant back my money for?" he exclaimed wildly. "Vat is de use to have money? Am I untrue to de prolet riat dat I should vant money and dey not to have it—my comrades of de revolution not to hafe it. And vat is de use to have money if dey can take it away from me again. For vy should Archer and Rollinson gif us our rights? No; dey shall gif us notting. Ve are proud; ve do not beg; ve take. Listen, Sylvy!"

And Aurentsky laid an almost pleading hand upon his daughter's arm and lowered his voice to tones of intimacy and confidence.

"De day of de revolution comes! De plans is laid. De dynamite is bought. De guns, knives, torches—de poison—everything vill pee readys. Den vee—vee—de people of Philadelphy—vill take Philadelphy for ourselves. De gutters run mitt blood; de skies vill be red mit fire—de streets be high mit broken bricks of buildings—de rich, de haters of de poor, vill die. A committee of de real peoples vill make a new constitution.

"Independence Hall shall pe dynamited. It is a fraud, a fake—a trap. De red flag—de flag of internationalism, it shall fly py der ruins. De bell, dot fool bell dey make so much fuss about, is cracked. Liberty itself is cracked. Ve vill melt up de liberty bell to make bombs—liberty bombs!"

"But father! father," whispered Sylvy hoarsely. "You have made yourself crazy. Levene has made you crazy. Such wild talk—"

"It is not vild, Sylvy," said her father, suddenly calm and convincing. A look even of tenderness stole into his face—a look that was almost the old Aurentsky look that belonged to the days of home and happiness. "It is not vild, Sylvy," he went on. "It is true. Almost vee are ready. But vee must make no mistake. To make sure vee vait and vork slow—slow but sure!"

"Plans?" The girl's voice showed fresh alarm.

"Can I trust mein own daughter?" Aurentsky's note was a trifle wild again. "Yes; yes; I trust her, and I tell her so she vill not think her father is crazy. Listen, Sylvy. Almost vee are ready. De committee of direct action is efery day in session.

"Almost de organization is finished. In efery factory de locomotive factory, de ship-building yards, de munitions factories, de cloth and de carpet mills at Kensington—in efery department of efery floor de men begin to know what dey are to do. Dey must pee ready!"

"For what?"

"Destruction!"

Aurensky uttered the word quietly and seemed scarcely to think it necessary to breathe beyond it. Sylvy sat for a moment cowed and overcome by the very ghastliness in its suggestion.

"The Archer Tool Works?" she asked involuntarily, simply because it seemed to her that to destroy that would be the ultimate of insensate fury.

"On efery floor!" grinned Aurensky.

"But how . . . destruction?" gasped Sylvy, her mind still grasping at one feature at a time of this nightmare dream.

"Emery powder in de bearings, pins in de looms, acids on de fabrics, monkey wrenches and sledge hammers in de machinery, chemicals in boilers and retorts, proportions dat is not right in de mixing of tings—dynamite bombs, TNT eferywhere!" Aurensky waved his arms wildly. "And for de king-pins of society—de bankers, de heads of de pig corporations, de bloodsuckers and de slave-drivers, for efery one of dem a knife, a bomb, or a pistol."

"Father!" demanded Sylvy sternly, gathering strength from her horror. "How much of this mad scheme of murder is a fact and how much of it is your brooding imagination?"

"De scheme is all a fact," chuckled Aurensky.

"And you—what is your relation to it?"

"I am one of de avengers." He spoke proudly, with swelling breast.

"You are one of the tools of Levene and his committee of wholesale murder?" inquired the girl fiercely.

"Dey gif a special honour to me," replied her father, complacently. "Buckingham!"

"Buckingham? You are to kill Mr. Buckingham?" Sylvy whispered weakly.

Aurensky smiled again.

"But the law——"

"Dere vill pee no law ven ve get trough."

"The courts——"

"Dere vill pee no courts—only chustice."

"The jail, the electric chair," threatened Sylvy.

"Dere vill pee no jails, no police, no electric chair—only chustice!" iterated Aurentsky brazenly.

For a moment the girl clasped her hands to her ears lest she should hear more; but her eyes were full of a kind of frozen terror as she still gazed at her father, and felt breaking up inside of her all the fine new hopes that this day had been born—hope that somehow she, Sylvy Aurentsky, cheered, inspired, and encouraged by the knowledge that there was disinterested kindness in the world, would of herself find a way to restore her father to a sane and optimistic view of life. Whether this horrible phantasmagoria of wholesale killing and city-wide destruction that her father had painted so vividly before her eyes was the revelation of a ghastly and carefully worked out plot, or the creation of his own disordered brain, the practical effect on her fresh hopes was the same. It murdered them!

Aurentsky was a weak man, strong in affection, violent in his emotional reaction. Love—the love of his family, of his children, had hitherto been the dominant factor in his life. It was brooding over their wrongs that had turned him into a madman. For the first time in his life now he saw his daughter's eyes upon him with a look of loathing. That look went through him like a dart; it shattered his self-complaisance; it disturbed and shamed and disconcerted him. Sylvy, turning, flung herself down upon the bed and burst into a flood of tears and a succession of violent but muffled sobbings that made the rickety piece of furniture tremble and protest.

"So?" inquired Aurentsky, timidly, apologetically.

"So? My schiner! My little darling! So?" And he reached out and touched the one white hand that lay within his reach. At his touch it was drawn away.

"So?" inquired Aurentsky, timidly, heartbroken this time. All his boastfulness and bravado was gone; all

his programme for a vast campaign of destruction faded out of his foolish head, for the time being, at least, before this presence of his doting daughter in her grief. From thinking of himself as an iron instrument of revenge, he had suddenly become a father stricken with remorse that words of his had plunged his child into such bitter sorrow.

Outside Becky Aurentsky had listened stolidly to the sounds of argument within. When her husband's voice was lifted high, what he said was the sort of thing he and Levene had been saying for a year, and it had come to mean no more to her than the sad, monotonous chanting of the family misfortunes. When, on the other hand, Jacob's voice was lowered to that grave note in which he communicated to Sylvy the ghastly details of an actual plot, she could not hear what was said. In consequence, though she knew that Sylvy had given way to tears, she understood nothing of the cause, and only noted with satisfaction that her husband's tone had become tender and apologetic.

However, Mrs. Aurentsky's concern to-night was not with such trifles as the occasion of strife between her husband and her eldest daughter. Her youngest child's fever had risen through the day, as it had for several days, but to-night, judged by the feel of the back of her maternal hand, which was the only clinical thermometer she possessed, it was higher than before. The lad was weaker, too, and his eyes burned like coals of fire. Greatly alarmed, a counsel of the neighbours had been called and had adjourned just before Sylvy's return. All voted the necessity of a doctor; but doctors were an expense, and an expense which the Aurentsky family had seldom afforded in the days of its prosperity. Now a doctor was as far away as the moon.

But neighbours will talk among themselves, and as a result of such talk, good Mrs. Lillienfeld had gone out to the social settlement on the big street around the corner. She came back, laboured ponderously up the

two flights of stairs, and thrust her great, mournfully sympathetic face through a crack in the door, just a few seconds after the interview between Ruth and her father had settled into its softer anti-climax.

"The settlement lady said a doctor should come to Isadore right away!" Mrs. Lillienfeld whispered; then she slanted an eye at the sufferer on the cot, and, after another glance at the mother, freighted with as much of hope and comfort as a neighbour's glance might carry, shut the door softly and tiptoed back to her own domestic problems, which were numerous and grave.

While the mother-heart in Becky Aurenstky leaped at the prospect of medical aid for her stricken son, the housekeeper-heart in her sank at the thought of any stranger coming into the apartment. Small, overloaded with furniture and humanity, stifling with the heat of late June, reeking with the steam and stench from tenements below and the fact that the house-construction permitted no adequate ventilation, the place could hardly be made endurable.

It was nevertheless orderly and as clean as the state of its household equipment and the lack of water-supply permitted, Sylvy, of course herself immaculate, could have endured nothing else, and Mrs. Aurenstky was slavishly faithful to her domestic duties. Yet that self-respecting woman had a natural wish now that it should be cleaner and more orderly. She left the fan and little Isadore for a moment and went softly to the closed door.

"Jacob!" she called softly. "Jacob! The doctor is coming."

The doctor? Aurenstky turned from the contemplation of the palpitating figure of Sylvy. The doctor? That must mean for Isadore, Isadore—his only boy, the pride of his heart when once his heart had contained pride—why, Isadore must be very sick then. He, Jacob Aurenstky, his father, had been too absorbed with the affairs of society and the world to notice

much or to inquire, taking it for granted that the little lad's indisposition was due to some childish derangement out of which his mother's coddling would soon bring him. With a terrible sinking in that heart which Sylvy's break-down had so freshly humanized, Aurentsky stood a moment terrified, and then turned toward the door.

"The doctor!" Sylvy also had echoed the word and she sat up quickly, her face whitening round the tear blotches.

Jacob went out and stood by the bedside looking down at little Isadore, hollow cheeked and yellow as paper but for the fire in his eyes.

"Isadore! Mein little Isadore! You would be speaking to your fader, yes?"

But little Isadore gave no sign that might be taken for response.

With a kind of nervous croak in his throat Jacob reached quickly for the fan and tried to coax a cool breath from the hot, fetid air into the boy's lungs.

Sylvy, meanwhile, had sprung up, laved her eyes quickly with a tablespoonful of that water which was so precious because it had all to be carried up from the ground floor bucket by bucket, and then hastened to relieve her mother of the task of straightening up that which was already straight.

Fortunately, the three younger girls had drifted out to play in the alley or loll on some convenient doorstep, reducing the possibilities of confusion by just so much subtraction of wiggly human bodies.

Strange footsteps moved haltingly down the passage, identified by all, and Sylvy opened the door. The doctor came in, a round-visaged spectacled man with a kindly expression on a patient face. At every step in the little alley below and on the two flights of stairs his nose, combined with past experience, had explained to him exactly what to expect.

Aurentsky's eyes hardly left the doctor's face, whose gravity forbade a question as he sat beside the cot.

The diagnosis seemed to be instantaneous. Prescriptions were written, alcohol baths ordered, and the assurance given that alcohol, milk, and medicines would all be forthcoming from the settlement. This was charity and the Aurentskys who had never accepted charity knew it; but in this extremity they accepted these assurances with awed, grateful hearts, for little Isadore—the doctor did not say it with his lips but with his eyes, his manner—little Isadore was near to those mysterious gates that swing only outward. Weak and undernourished, the fever had caught and in a few days wasted him to nothing while only a discerning mother watched and a family absorbed in the misery of its personal concerns moved about him unaware.

The doctor, turning from the bedside, looked around him, stepped to the sink, and turned the tap. Nothing issued. Then he saw the two water buckets setting by.

“No pressure?”

Mrs. Aurentsky shook her head.

“The toilet?”

“In de yard.”

The yard! Save the mark. The doctor knew without seeing what the yard was like—a pigpen square in the canyonlike cleft that ran between the backs of these two rows of wrecks called houses. The yard would be paved with bricks littered with garbage. One such yard would breed typhoid germs enough, if properly distributed, to slay a city.

“Does the sanitary inspector never come here?”

“Inspector—yes, he come and shake his head.”

“But why doesn't he close the old rookery up?” asked the doctor, impatiently. “I'm going to see!” And he walked out with a very determined look on his grave face.

Within an hour after the doctor went away a nurse came, also from the settlement, and the Aurentskys in their helplessness suffered her and clung to her with their eyes, as to an angel from heaven, while she set about to sponge little Isadore and give him sips of

milk with whiskey in it. After a time the nurse went, but with Sylvy installed as night nurse, to keep the fan going, to repeat the alcohol baths and the sips from the glass of milk with the saucer over it. This was hard, for Sylvy must work to-morrow, but what did any of them care for hardness now.

At midnight Jacob Aurenstsky surprised by coming and taking Sylvy firmly from her place at the bedside and sending her to sleep. Having watched all the evening from a distance, he performed the nurse's duties quite as well, and with an awkward tenderness that brought tears to his wife, observing from the pillow upon which she rested but could not sleep.

For two days the Aurenstskys walked with soft steps and soberer and soberer faces as they spelled each other at the bedside of little Isadore, hoping against hope, while the little body grew frailer, until finally even the brightness of fever burning in the eyes began to dull because the fuel was all gone. Jacob Aurenstsky gave up last of all. Even when he saw the end his eyes refused to believe.

"Gone?" he whispered stupidly. "Gone?" looking into the nurse's face for confirmation. Her sympathetic nod supplied it.

Amid the wailing of his wife, which had broken into loudness some moments before, and with Sylvy sobbing upon his arm, while the other children gathered with white faces beside their mother, Aurenstsky stood tall and thin as ever, his bushy hair tousled, his beard scraggly as usual, his dark eyes set upon the waxlike thing upon the bed and his mouth open, motionless, voiceless. Aurenstsky was facing a new fact in his experience of fatherhood.

Death cuts a deep gash in the life of the poor, but the outer edges of the wound must soon be closed. The neighbourhood women came in and wailed with Mrs. Aurenstsky. The biggest of all the Big Sisters came in and ministered to the stricken family.

Sylvy's friends in the Junior Club came to her.

There were tenderly sympathetic notes from Ruth and Hester, Ruth's natural impulse to send flowers being checked by Hester's reminder that flowers have no place in orthodox Jewish tribute to their dead.

It was characteristic of the Aurenstskys that in all their poverty they had saved a sum sufficient to defray the costs of a simple funeral, and that they spent it resolutely, declining outside offers of assistance. They might accept milk and medicine for Isadore while he lived, but charity must not buy his shroud.

During the dark days which followed, with her mother weeping and inconsolable, with the children hysterical and irresponsible, Sylvy emerged as the centre of moral strength in the family. She led Jacob Aurenstsky around like a child, and he looked up to her wonderingly and accepted her leadership.

"Better take the cart out, father," she proposed as soon as the customary few short days of ceremonial mourning were over. "It will help get your mind off. I'm going to work myself."

He went docilely enough and that night it was to Sylvy instead of to his wife that Jacob told over the profits of his day, and talked about the buyings for tomorrow's trade. Sylvy seized the opportunity to cheer and encourage him. "That's nice," she boasted, comparing the daily account, "that's seventy-one cents more profit than Tuesday. Let's try to-morrow to make it a dollar more than to-day."

"I should try, Sylvy, for you and to buy the stone for little Isadore." The voice was broken, yet hopeful. In it was no touch of bitterness, no outcry against fate. No more talk about the Romanoffs of the rich. Sylvy herself felt greatly encouraged. She feared only Levene's influence—the man's uncanny power to stir up suspicion and malice and hatred in the breast of those who listened. Toward the beginning of the second week he came in. It was his first visit since little Isadore's death. Apparently it was no part of Levene's code to bestow sympathy and consolation.

"You been away?" Aurentsky inquired somewhat critically.

"Nup! Busy!" explained Levene.

"You didn't hear about my little Isadore?" Jacob's whole expression softened at the words, his eyes yearning for sympathy from the one he had come to regard as his most trusted friend, but he got none.

"Yes; I heard," said Levene. "Lucky feller, little Isadore!"

"Yes, but unlucky me," declaimed Aurentsky, as he thrust a finger dramatically at his own breast. "You don't got vun vord to say to me; you don't come near me to take my hand and say you are sorry," he reproached.

"Revolutionists have got no time to be sorry—no time to have families even. A revolutionist is a soul in flame. It would be better if we had no children." Levene's tone was harsh and unfeeling.

"No children?" and the father-heart of Aurentsky led him to open his arms and gather to his breast the nearest child, which happened to be the next to the youngest remaining, anemic little Rose, whom some instinct seemed to tell him might go next after Isadore. Levene looked greatly displeased and very critical.

"Aurentsky," he exclaimed, "I am surprised at your weakness. You are not a good comrade to have your heart melt so over your children. Revolutionists are so devoted to the cause of all children that they have no time to devote to any particular children."

Becky, the broken-spirited, roused by the memory of something she had heard about Levene's attitude toward marriage, flared up with, "And so carin' for all women that you don't got a wife of your own."

"That's the straight of it," declared Levene. "A revolutionist should never marry."

"But my husband is married already."

"The revolution should come first."

"Revolution! Why do you all the time talk revolution?" exclaimed Mrs. Aurentsky, exasperated.

"My children come before my own life efen," insisted Jacob. "It is for dem dat I am a revolutionist."

"But you are really not a true revolutionist," retorted Levene, eyeing Aurentsky doubtfully. "I shall speak to the committee about it."

"My little Isadore!" murmured Aurentsky, bowing his head in his hands as if, abandoning Levene in disgust, he turned again to his grief.

Sylvy saw this action with leaping heart, and read its significance instantly. Above all the grief and pain and shock of these last few days there had remained that greater shock: the knowledge that her father had either been assigned to commit murder or had dreamed that he had been assigned to it, and in either event had cheerfully accepted the assignment.

She saw him now slipping out of the toils of Levene. The softening events of the last few days had released her father from the meshes of such a plot; if one existed. Oh, little Isadore! If his death had wrought that happy conclusion, there was a goodness in God's grace which she had not yet realized; for Sylvy's theory of the death of her brother was somewhat different from that of the doctor. She ascribed it to God's will. Doctor Owenbaugh ascribed it to typhoid germs and was day by day wrathfully digging through the records of the sanitary bureau to find who was to blame for permitting this spot of contagion to exist.

Levene, finding the atmosphere so uncongenial, tried blunderingly to undo the force of his first tactlessness, but failing soon took himself off, and for some weeks it seemed that fate had abandoned its enmity for the Aurentskys.

Jacob pursued the business of a roving green grocer more and more assiduously, and his profits enlarged to nearly twice what he had been accustomed to bring in. There was better living for the family, and the same thrifty putting by of surplus that goes on steadily in most Jewish families of the immigrant type.

Meantime a distinct change in Sylvy's personal fortunes had been brought about by Hester.

"You should not be hiding your pretty hands and face away in some gloomy old factory building, packing cigarettes or buttons or whatever it is that you do," she had reproved one day. "Your personality is your finest asset. My father would love to have you in his store, selling ribbons or laces or something like that. You would get on so well!"

"Oh, do you think he would like to have me?" inquired modest Sylvy, a hungry look in her eyes and that little touch of wistful emphasis on "like," as reminding that, above everything else, the girl was proud. "I would love to sell things, nice things you know, that make people happy."

Poor child! After this dreadful year she was putting a touching emphasis on that word happy.

"They're getting to put pretty girls in the men's furnishing departments," laughed Hester. "They think it draws trade. Just quit your place Saturday night, and come to the store at nine Monday morning, and I'll be there to introduce you to the Employment Superintendent myself."

So great was Sylvy's faith in Hester that she acted upon this suggestion without another word, and Hester proved her magic, for the girl was immediately installed as a cash girl in the necktie aisle, at eight dollars per week, the same she had been earning as a packer and twice as much as cash girls ordinarily received; but this was Hester's intervention again, and even that magnificent wage was to be increased shortly.

Sylvy was mature for a cash girl, but—"It's the quickest way to learn what you want to learn, and kind of gives you the run of the store. In a few weeks we'll have you selling goods."

This was what Joe Remick, the employment man, said to her for he was anxious, naturally, to oblige Miss Hester, and he, too, was caught by Sylvy's demure prettiness and by the soft husk in her voice that had

set chords echoing in the breast of Victor Rollinson. It was Sylvy's fate, too, that the very day she went to work Victor Rollinson came in, paused a moment at the necktie counter, indicated his choices by tapping on the counter with his thumb quite like other men, made selections quickly, and opened his wallet and stood waiting for his change with mind immediately absorbed and his eyes somewhere up in the top of the store, for he did not see Sylvy come and take his sales-slip from the clerk, together with his crisp Federal Reserve note; nor did he even notice when she came back.

She was tempted mischievously to pluck his sleeves, but mischievously refrained; yet drank her wondering eyes full of the man at the same time that her heart enlarged with sympathy for him.

And this man loved her! He watched over her, day by day, and—was still watching over her. Why, come to think of it, if what Ruth Buckingham told her was true, and she believed in Ruth as implicitly as in Hester—he would know to-night when he got his report from the man who was her day-time shadow that she had gone to work here—that she was a cash-girl in the necktie department, perhaps would even know that she had carried his change for him.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE STRANGLE HOLD

AT ABOUT 5 o'clock Jerry came into the great man's office smiling as usual. Jerry was feeling rather well these days. One of the daily papers, casting upon the political situation, had that morning remarked that Victor Rollinson would be a good man for Mayor. Mr. Buckingham, however, did not smile. He glowered.

"The time has come for you to get out of politics," announced that gentleman with an abruptness that was intended to be irresistibly forceful, but which registered also as brutal.

Jerry's blue eyes reacted to this by gazing blandly while his spine stiffened.

"Your business will need all of your attention from now on."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Jerry, resenting the impertinence of these words.

"Your line of credits is going to be called!"

A tremour which he hoped was carefully concealed passed up and down Jerry's frame, for the harsh finality of this announcement called up staggering possibilities.

"Called?" Jerry's voice was a bit husky and his response not immediate, because, to tell the truth, the Archer Tool Works was a bit stretched out—financially. The young man had known this faintly for some time; he became vividly conscious of it now all in a moment.

Paul, as has been said before, was very ambitious to make money. In the midst of one enlargement they had enlarged their building plans again. Ultimately, this meant vast increase of capacity; ultimately, too,

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“Young man, unless you give me your word before you leave here that your political activities will cease at once, your firm's credits will be curtailed as fast as I can shear them off.”



vast increase of profits; but now it had absorbed their surplus and reserves, consumed their working capital and postponed the day of profits several months.

Not that Paul and Henry T. Archer, who looked after the finances, had engaged in any hazardous ventures. Not at all. The business was sound; it was more than sound, for, on present prospects, it had a gold mine planted in the centre of it, but its expansion had been planned on the basis of the customary line of credits. If these were to be withdrawn suddenly, it was like pulling the central prop from under the whole structure.

"Called?" Jerry murmured again into the glaring silence, while reflecting dizzily on what such a catastrophe would mean—thinking of his father, thinking of Paul, thinking of what was dearer to either of them than money, the Archer business honour.

"You're stretched out pretty thin, I notice," gloated the financier with a wave of his hand toward the chart.

Jerry turned his glance aside from Mr. Buckingham's face and viewed the figures on the sheet. They told him what he knew already—that a blow sufficiently ruthless could throw the Archer Tool Works into a receiver's hands.

Judging that the dangerous possibilities had soaked in sufficiently, Mr. Buckingham went on impatiently to clinch the matter.

"I am tired of this nonsense," he blurted. "You have refused my advice, you have declined to be reasonable. You have lost my confidence, and now your firm must suffer for it. I have seen this coming for some time, and a number of the Tool Works' creditors have been in here talking to me to-day, but it is not yet too late. I am confident that if you will abandon these silly political ambitions of yours, and cease the agitation which promises a political turnover in the city, the matter can be adjusted. I think my influence is such that——"

Jerry interrupted. This whole sudden change in

Mr. Buckingham's manner, together with the calamity which was threatened, had left him rather flat for the moment, but now his fighting spirit rose swiftly.

"Mr. Buckingham," he said, determined not to let the man don another mask in his presence, "will you do my intelligence the honour to abandon that line of argument? I am not deceived by it. The credit of the Archer Tool Works in this city is unimpaired, except as you may have impaired it. If our creditors have been here to-day talking to you, it is because you have asked them to come. What's in the wind? What sort of a scare is it you're trying to throw into me?"

At this defiance Buckingham threw off the guise of urbanity he had been about to don once more and burst out sharply with:

"Young man, unless you give me your word before you leave here that your political activities will cease at once, your firm's credits will be curtailed as fast as I can shear them off."

"And that would be pretty fast," conceded Jerry drily.

"It would," snapped Mr. Buckingham. "So fast the Archer Tool Works would be in the hands of a receiver in less than a week."

"And that is what you propose to do?"

"It is what I propose to do," answered Mr. Buckingham, relentlessly, triumphantly almost.

Jerry hesitated, not that he was in doubt as to the next word, but to permit himself the luxury of enjoying to the full every sensation involved in this ultimatum. On the one view he saw the Archer Tool Works collapsing, with all the wisecre business rivals gossiping and muttering, "I told you so." On the other view he saw his political organization tumbling and some hundreds of dismayed citizens, realizing sadly that they had been betrayed by a rich man who had sold himself for a handful of securities. This last vision stirred Jerry's emotions. It made him sorry for Mr. Buckingham. His indignation cooled somewhat and he was

fired with a desire to make that crass man see the picture which he saw.

"Mr. Buckingham," he inquired, "forgetting all the big men in our movement, can you get the vision of the hand-to-hand workers in our modest organization, these little division leaders who for twelve months now have been faithfully talking clean government and promising the people in their blocks that they would get the police out of politics, the firemen out of politics, and the Magistrates out of politics, and take away the power of local ward heelers to thwart the law, keep favourites out of jail and punish innocent men whose only crime was political independence? Why, all those men have left is hope."

"Trouble makers, every one of them!" ejaculated Mr. Buckingham.

"Would you have me betray that hope?" Jerry went on feelingly, having ignored the interruption.

"You better think about betraying the Archer Tool Works," retorted Mr. Buckingham savagely.

"That's for you to think about; it is you who proposes to do .," answered Jerry bitingly. "I love the Archer Tool Works. I was born in it almost, as my father was. You are proud, Mr. Buckingham, both of your name and your money, but I want to tell you that my father and brother and I are prouder of the Archer Tool Works, the integrity of its product and the honour of its name than you could be if you owned the national debt; yet I would see the Archer Tool Works go into the hands of a receiver to-morrow; I would see our building enterprise stop, our patents and processes taken from us, our organization scattered, everything, before I would abandon some of the men who can hardly read or write, but that are working earnestly with us to smash the political machine. Is that clear now?"

"It is," said Mr. Buckingham sharply. "You are as fanatical as I suspected you of being. But, melodramatics aside, you know what I expect now."

"I do," said Jerry, and closed his lips tightly to keep

his tongue from flying out at Mr. Buckingham for that sneer about melodramatics. Jerry could not help it if he spoke with passion. When he thought of those men working so earnestly and faithfully through every division and ward of the city, his breast was full of passion.

Once outside, however, the young manufacturer felt weak, and misgivings came to him. He hurried first to Ruth. An open breach with Mr. Buckingham had come and he might expect soon to be forbidden the house.

"Marry me to-night," he urged.

"No," decided Ruth. "Papa has treated me so generously always that I cannot do any hasty act; that would seem like disloyalty or desertion. Instead I will talk to him, try to reason with him. I really do think, Jerry, that I might make him see."

As Jerry looked into those earnest blue eyes, as he felt her hands so tenderly upon his shoulders, it seemed that if any influence in the world could enlighten the cold mind and bend the stubborn will of William H. Buckingham it must be Ruth.

"Very well, Ruth; but if they tear us apart now—"

"Jerry!" the girl exclaimed, holding him tightly, "nothing can tear us apart!" Then she kissed him good-bye.

Jerry hurried homeward and the moment dinner was concluded got Paul and his father into the library while he broke the news.

For a moment Henry T. Archer sat perfectly motionless, his fine patrician features pale, his eyes fixed and expressing that mental struggle which seemed necessary in order to grasp the significance of such a situation.

"Nol" he ejaculated presently. "Nol Buckingham would never dare do it. He is only brow-beating according to his habit."

"I think father is right," said Paul. "It was only a bluff and you called it proper."

"We shall soon know," announced Mr. Archer, "for

I am going shopping with that \$160,000 of new paper to-morrow."

"We hear of these things being done from time to time, you know," went on Paul, seeing how anxious Jerry was, "but I think where the proposed victim meets the attacks with courage nothing comes of them."

Jerry, studying his father's face closely from his corner, knew that despite his coolness and self-control he was distinctly worried.

"Sorry I brought all this on you, Dad!" he exclaimed, laying an impulsive hand upon his father's.

"I'm not," persisted his father stoutly. "Just as well find out one time as another if this is a free country or not. The thing to consider is just what we could do."

"He has caught us at the worst possible time," remarked Paul, with knitting brow. "Shouldn't wonder if the old rhinoceros had been waiting months for just this combination of our financial necessities to arrive."

"According to his chart, there are \$142,000 of notes coming up for payment or renewal in the next five days," specified Jerry.

The conference in the Archer library lasted long, and the best suggestion which came out of it was Paul's that he should go to Washington and seek an advance upon their war contracts sufficient to tide them over until a realignment of their finances could be worked out.

"The trouble with that," objected Henry T. Archer, "is that in pinching our credits here Buckingham will also go to the length of smearing us in Washington, and for us to go down there seeking assistance will only seem to confirm a warning that this big bully may have issued."

"Nice sort of thing, this Buckingham connection, isn't it," remarked Jerry, "when it can pardon a pick-pocket or go down to Washington and poison the mind of the National Government?"

"And that's just why at last my whole heart and soul is going into this fight against it," declared Henry

Archer determinedly. Never a passionate reformer, he was most surely roused when he found his individual rights infringed.

"The reason we're no better at thinking a way out to-night," opined Jerry, "is that there is still a doubt as to whether the crisis really exists or not."

"To-morrow we shall know," declared Mr. Archer, and at 3 o'clock in the afternoon he did know.

The boys had put in an anxious day of waiting, and the sight of their father throwing himself wearily into his chair brought the sons instantly to his side.

"Seven banks have refused the new paper, boys," he confessed immediately. "It looks as if the blow was coming. Two of the seven suggested that they would feel more comfortable if the current loans were reduced."

"Then it is coming without a doubt," conceded Paul and Jerry instantly.

The second day it had come. Their loans were being called in, their credits suspended, and unpleasant rumours about the Archer Tool Works were flying through the city. Jerry was in a cold, wordless rage.

Henry T. Archer was pale and troubled. He worked all day trying to establish new lines of credit, and twice had arranged for loans from private parties that would have carried them over only to have the said parties notify him by telephone later that they would be unable to realize on their assets.

"After they talked with their bankers," sneered Paul.

"Exactly," agreed Henry T.

Saturday night a telephone call came from Ruth. By mutual agreement Jerry had waited for this. It was their joint judgment that for the two to be seen together or to be overheard in communication at this time would be to invite the proclamation of a barred zone about the Buckingham premises so far as Jerry was concerned.

"Nobody here but Aunt Stella," purred the soft, eager voice of the girl.

"Coming over fast!" chuckled Jerry with boyish enthusiasm, and made a dash for the garage.

As a true and natural lover he was far more anxious to inquire foolishly as to the state of Ruth's affections for him, and to receive assurance in actions that spoke louder than words, that her heart was still true and her longing for him increasing, than he was to hear details as to the girl's endeavours to dissuade her father from this final exhibition of ruthlessness. Nevertheless the conversation eventually came round to that, and Jerry was surprised to hear her explain:

"Father went to Canada that night on a fishing trip. I haven't seen him since."

"On a fishing trip! Great heavens! He sets his merciless machine to tearing us to pieces and then calmly goes off to play and leaves us to be destroyed."

"But it can't be as bad as that," exclaimed Ruth, alarmed.

"Ruth, it very nearly is," confessed Jerry desperately, "and yet I'll never quit. Father and Paul are regular trumps. They don't even suggest quitting."

"Oh, Jerry, where two or three men are so loyal to each other and to a cause, there cannot be such a thing as defeat. Can you think so?"

"No; I can't," said Jerry stoutly; but Ruth knew that after a delicious hour with her he went away greatly troubled and a very anxious pair of blue eyes gazed after him as he departed.

But Sunday intervened for the Archers as a day of respite. Nothing could happen to them on Sunday. Mr. Archer, exhausted, spent the day in bed gathering strength for the coming week, while Paul went hither and yon trying to organize a group of the friends of his father who would pool surplus resources and come to the rescue of the firm. Jerry put out in the early morning receiving some of his division leaders who worked all the week and were, therefore, unable to see him upon another day. To them the young organizer gave no hint of the crisis through which he was passing;

and the ready presence, the humble loyalty the eager interest of these men in the prospects of the "Real Republicans" campaign buoyed Jerry up. They helped him to resolve afresh that he would never surrender.

Later in the morning Jerry went to church with his mother and sister, partly out of a sense of duty, and partly because of a hope that out of that calm atmosphere of worship he might get a gleam of some sort.

"Tell it out. Tell it out among the nations," chanted the choir, and Jerry had got his gleam; but he didn't recognize it then. At first it was only a kind of refrain that kept buzzing in memory's ear; and did not relate itself to anything in particular, until the next day while Paul fretted and his father hurried about town. Then, all at once, as Jerry pondered at his desk, this refrain from yesterday—"Tell it out—tell it out," had been translated into a big, definite, practical idea. Detail by detail the plan took shape—a plan that promised victory and that cut two ways like a double-edged fiery sword.

"It's a winner," exulted Jerry. "It's a sure winner."

Shortly after this his father came in, looking more weary and discouraged than ever, and instead of going to his own desk, he turned in and stopped before Jerry's with Paul hurrying in to hear the latest word.

The light of confidence in Jerry's eyes rather displeased Mr. Archer, as indicating that his son was not taking the situation seriously enough, and there was just a touch of reproach in the father's tones as he announced gravely:

"Jerry, we have but two days more, and I don't see where the money is coming from."

"I do!" declared that young man leaping up, with a ring of triumph in his voice. "I do!"

"Where, in heaven's name!" exclaimed Mr. Archer, a bit petulantly.

"From the people of Philadelphia!"

"I don't get you," observed Paul, scanning his brother's face critically.

"The sign! The sign!" exclaimed Jerry, pointing upward. "The sign on the roof! I'm going to tell Philadelphia what's happened to us, and why it happened. I'm going to ask them to take up our loans."

"I confess I do not understand," said Mr. Archer, and his manner was a trifle frigid.

"That's the politician in you talking," demurred Paul.

"No, it's my faith in the people, my faith in the power of publicity, and in the justice of our cause. Let's ask them to take our notes in small amounts—a popular subscription. I guess I get the idea in part from the Liberty Bond campaigns, but it develops quickly."

"But how are you going to get sufficient money in small loans, and how are you going to get it quick enough to do us any good?" demanded Paul.

"Just tell 'em the facts," proposed Jerry, "about our business, its conditions, its necessities, its prospects, tell who put us in such a jam, and ask them if they're going to stand for it? Ask 'em if they don't want to help us."

Henry T. Archer shivered. Exposing the details of his business to the public in order to demonstrate its soundness as a basis for a popular loan—although the exact sort of demonstration he offered freely to the loan committee of every bank—was a proceeding to which a man of his natural reserve felt the greatest repugnance. And yet—the situation was desperate. Where else was help to come from?

Jerry, his enthusiasm in full eruption, was going on with:

"Offer 'em twelve months' notes at 6 per cent., with privileges of renewal, and in sums as low as \$50—and they'll come in and eat 'em up. The Archer Tool Works, in fact, is as sound as any bank; it's been here longer than most of the banks."

Such was the infectiousness of Jerry's confidence in

the plan that Mr. Archer actually began to have a little faith in the idea—but it was still his doubts that expressed themselves.

"It's politics more than it's business," he demurred.

"It's a wild scheme," declared Paul, who had been thinking quickly, "but I'm blessed if I don't begin to like the sound of it. The very audacity of the idea will hit 'em between the eyes. By hokey, wouldn't wonder if old Jerry could put it over! Yes, Dad, I believe he can," and Paul went over lock, stock, and barrel to acceptance of the project.

But even though he began to put some faith in the notion, Henry T. Archer's heart assent was not won to the project. It was too radical, too foreign to the traditions which all his life had governed him. He gave his consent simply because there seemed no other way—because there was nothing else to do except surrender, and surrender was not in Henry's blood. Buckingham might smash him, but he would never, after this wanton attack upon the Archer credit, see the latter standing with his hands up in the air and hear him shouting, "Kamerad!"

After Mr. Archer's consent was actually given, but while the feasibility of the project was undergoing a sort of re-examination, a caller for Jerry was announced—a caller who imperiously insisted upon seeing that engrossed young man at once. Jerry turned toward his own office in some irritation until, through the glass partition, the importunate person was glimpsed. Then Jerry made a dash for the door.

"Ruth!" he cried, leaping to her side. "Ruth!"

"Jerry!" exclaimed the girl, her blue eyes mingling love and anxiety. "Is it too late? Is it too late? I have hardly slept for thinking of your worried, grave face the other night. Here," and she pressed a small morocco satchel into his hand, "here are one million dollars in Liberty Bonds. Father's birthday present to me, you know. Keep them as long as you want."

"Ruth! You darling!" Right then, glass parti-

tions and all, a very impulsive, predatory act was committed by Jerry and hardly resented at all by Ruth.

"They will carry you through, won't they?" inquired the girl eagerly. "You can go to New York or anywhere, you know, and get money on them."

"Why, of course, they would, you treasure!" exclaimed Jerry, taking the satchel and the hand that held it with both of his for a moment while he gently impelled the girl into a chair. "We couldn't let you do it, of course, but it's wonderful of you to offer them. Wonderful! Stunning! Glorious! It means more to me than you know. For one thing, it kills a mean little apprehension that's been lurking in my heart and torturing me—the fear that when the breach with your father actually came you mightn't be able to decide between us."

"Oh, Jerry," protested Ruth, her eyes searching his with a mixture of tenderness and reproach. "How could you doubt? And yet—and yet," she admitted. "I couldn't turn against Papa, you know, until I was afraid you would go—go down without me." The girl's bosom was heaving, the colour came and went in her cheeks, and it was easy to see that she had passed through serious emotional conflict to reach her decision.

"Bless your dear heart!" ejaculated Jerry, with deeper fervency, and was about to venture upon another predatory act when Ruth's uplifted hand warned him off.

"But why is it, you say you won't let me do it? Isn't it necessary? Have you got help?" she inquired.

"I just couldn't let you anyway," explained Jerry, though his eyes were big with gratitude and his tones very tender. "No; we haven't help; but Ruth, I've got the greatest scheme ever," and hurriedly, excitedly, with confidence in the project growing every time he described it, Jerry sketched the outlines of his proposal. Ruth, responding to the audacious and the dramatic

element in it, listened with glowing approval, but after a thoughtful moment at the end suddenly asked:

"And will you have to tell who—who did this to you? Will you mention father's name?"

"Of course," responded Jerry, for that was to be the strong card in his appeal to the populace.

"Is it—is it necessary?" Ruth stammered, her face pale and lips quivering while even the little white hand that clung still to the small morocco satchel was trembling.

It was Jerry's turn to hesitate. He had been thinking of Buckingham only as a public enemy—as a menace to the public's good. Now, all at once, he saw him only as Ruth's father.

"No!" he answered suddenly. "No! it isn't necessary—to hurt you, Ruth."

"Oh, I am so glad," said the girl, almost in a whisper. "Father has been so good to me always," she murmured, a little apologetically. "Not that I don't see how—how wrong he is this time. This—this shows how I feel about it all," and she lifted the little morocco satchel.

"Yes, bless your heart, Ruth, that does show," declared Jerry, "but we won't need them now, girlie. You better take them back and put them in your vault."

"But I couldn't, Jerry, not till I know you won't need them. Something might happen. Your scheme might fail, you know."

"Fail? Ruth, it couldn't fail; because our cause is just. It couldn't fail unless the people of Philadelphia fail. I have insisted they will never fail when a clear-cut moral issue is presented to them."

"But I'll feel so much better if you have them till I know the crisis is past," and again Ruth pressed the little morocco satchel on Jerry. "Wouldn't you feel more—more comfortable to know you had a million dollars in your safe to-night? Wouldn't you?"

"Father would," admitted Jerry. "Dear old dad! he's been so loyal. Never a word of reproach for all

this mess I've got him in, but he's only half-hearted on my publicity project."

"Do take them, then, for the present anyway."

"I promise to," said Jerry, seeing it would relieve her, and held the satchel in his hand, while he saw Ruth to her car, then came back to exhibit the securities to his father before putting them in the vault.

"What do you think of that, Dad?"

"Do you mean to say?" gasped Henry T. Archer, and for an instant the power of speech was lost and there was vacancy in his eyes, though he gazed steadfastly at his son, while reflecting on the significance of such an offer. "Of course, we couldn't use them," he concluded in a moment.

"Certainly not," averred Jerry; "but it shows the spirit of the girl, doesn't it?"

"Jerry!" exclaimed his father, with an abruptness and force which indicated a very searching inquiry about to follow. "Are you going to marry Ruth?"

Jerry reddened. "That is the present intention, father, on the part of the two parties concerned most," he responded with a nervous laugh.

"How soon?"

"That is a point upon which there is still some difference of opinion."

"Hum! I see." Mr. Archer, after an interval of silence, threw back his head and laughed quite merrily. This laughter echoed pleasantly in Jerry's ears as with his own hand he stowed the bonds in the vault.

Mr. James T. Castleman! This name was on a card which between the thumb and forefinger of his secretary pursued Jerry to the vault.

Mr. Castleman was one of that big three who were now financing the Real Republican organization. Naturally Jerry was delighted to see him.

"Just came in from Atlantic City," explained Mr. Castleman. "I heard a rumour downtown that Buckingham is playing the old army game on you, and came right out to see about it."

"Something like it," admitted Jerry, with a smile.

"Not being in active business, the information got to me rather late. How much do you need?"

This was Jerry's turn to break out in laughter of pure joy.

"Well, if that isn't like you!" he exclaimed. "Of all friends in the world, Mr. Castleman, commend me to the one who hunts you up and says, 'How much do you need?'"

Mr. Castleman also laughed modestly.

"Brown is in the White Mountains and Evans is at Buzzard's Bay, but I could get them on the long distance, and I guess between us, we could sort of stave things off for the present, at least."

"Mr. Castleman," said Jerry, and there was a still grateful gurgle in his tones, "that's just what I might have expected, but the fact is I forbade either father or Paul to try to get in touch with you. You see, it happens that you three gentlemen and the Archers never had any business relations, nor much acquaintance outside of——"

"But we all know what the Archer name stands for in business," insisted Mr. Castleman.

"Yes, but I've only met you through the Real Republican organization—we're only, so to speak, political friends, and I couldn't let the fact of our association for patriotic purposes be made the occasion for coming to you on a selfish mission."

"But—it's politics got you into this trouble. If it wasn't for us, and the work we're doing together, do you think Buckingham would be tightening up the screws on you?"

"That sounds fine, coming from you," admitted Jerry, "and noble, and I suppose it's true, but you could not expect me to say it."

"Now it's been said once more: How much do you need?" Mr. Castleman was a practical man.

"The fact is, I don't think we're going to need anything," explained Jerry. "I think we've just found a

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

311

better way to take care of ourselves, and that is by putting the situation up to the people of Philadelphia, where it belongs." Then he explained in some detail the plan evolved.

Mr. Castleman listened interestedly, with a quizzical smile upon his face, and a growing light of admiration in his fine gray eyes. "It's novel enough!" was his first comment. As Jerry talked on it became apparent that his approval of the project was quite heartily won. "You're right, Jerry," he declared, finally. "It's a fight for the people of Philadelphia you're making. Nothing could be better than to let them know what that fight is costing you and who it's against. Besides, it's a good test of the state of the public mind. If the people neglect you now, it might be an indication that they are not worth fighting for."

"But they are," declared Jerry stoutly.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PEOPLE ON TRIAL

AFTER Jerry had introduced Mr. Castleman to his father and made the latter acquainted with the generous impulse which had brought the retired millionaire to their office, the latter took his way back down town and thence to Atlantic City, prepared to watch a very interesting engagement from afar. But he left behind him one idea that stirred Jerry almost more than the financial necessities of the firm. That was his remark that such a project would put the people of Philadelphia on trial.

Jerry had come to have a great sympathy for and a great faith in the common people. He had seen how painfully concrete were all their problems, with what self-respect they set about to meet their own needs, and how honestly loyal they tried to be to those who were loyal to them—where ignorance and prejudice did not keep them from knowing who was loyal to them and who not.

"Publicity! Publicity! Tell the people the facts. They can be trusted to judge accurately if they have the facts."

More and more this had come to have a cardinal place in Jerry's political creed. Now he had before him a job of telling some facts to the people, and it must be done thoroughly in order to be a fair test. It was therefore no longer a mere labour of necessity, but one of love and enthusiastic faith, that he undertook. Yet as his mind buckled to the job he realized how big a task was in front of him. Moreover, the

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

313

seed must be sown and the crop ripened and harvested all within forty-eight hours."

Already, Jerry's request, Paul had set things in motion and the sign painter was rallying his forces for another night painting job. An expert writer of newspaper advertising and the head of a firm of printers and bill posters were also on their way out to the Archer plant, for Jerry, besides securing wide and immediate publicity, had to supply some detailed knowledge this time, and dared not, therefore, depend upon the sign alone.

Before the advertising writer arrived Jerry had the copy ready for the sign. It was to be brief but startling, something that would set the people of the vicinity talking and make a newspaper story, while additional details were to be supplied in the newspaper advertisements and in the huge posters that before noon of the following day were to confront the eye in every part of the city.

This time, too, Jerry notified the newspapers in advance of what was to come off, and through the early evening kept open house for reporters and photographers at his office in the Works. The photographers took flashlights of Jerry at his desk, of the sign painters at work, of the machinery being installed in the finished part of the new factory, and of the vast skeleton frame which represented the second enlargement of the plant.

The enthusiasm of the reporters was great and highly cheering to Jerry until, upon inquiry, he learned that this enthusiasm was for the news story. As to whether the project might have practical results, these shrewd-minded, somewhat cynical feelers of the public pulse were not so sure. This made Jerry realize the more keenly how much was at stake. Failure would put a serious crimp in that high degree of popular prestige which he had enjoyed since the day of his triumph over Rand.

At daybreak the sign was in place, and flashed o.

the eye of Henry T. Archer as his car rolled over the Schuylkill bridge, just as had the franchise sign.

IN THE PEOPLE WE TRUST!

TWENTY-ONE BANKS AND TRUST COMPANIES HAVE SUDDENLY REFUSED US CREDIT. WE WERE WARNED THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN IF JEREMIAH T. ARCHER DID NOT CEASE HIS EFFORTS TO OVERTHROW CONTRACTOR-GOVERNMENT. HE DID NOT CEASE AND WILL NOT TILL CONTRACTOR-GOVERNMENT IS OVERTHROWN.

TO KEEP OUR BUSINESS GOING, WE MUST HAVE \$180,000 IN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS AND HALF A MILLION IN TEN DAYS. WILL YOU, THE COMMON PEOPLE, TAKE OUR NOTES AT 6 PER CENT IN SUMS OF \$50 OR MORE, AND THEREBY DEFEAT THE WILL OF THE MONEY LORDS AND MAKE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE A FACT? SEE NEWSPAPERS AND BILLBOARD ADVERTISEMENTS FOR DETAILS.

IN THE PEOPLE WE TRUST! ARE WE WRONG?

But while Mr. Archer was reading the sign on the factory, and rather pessimistically, it must be confessed, tens of thousands of people all over the city were being startled by the full-page advertisements in the newspapers. These advertisements, after reciting in general terms the incidents leading up to the present situation, pointed to the long and enviable standing of the Archer Tool Works in the city's business history, and made frank and forcible appeal to the people to come forward and underwrite its credit "in this time of crisis when the black powers of political corruption, reaching upward to the very heart of the city's financial strength, have threatened to punish us by the extinction of our business."

"Sound as any bank" was one of the phrases in the appeal for the loan, and it concluded with a statement of the condition of the business, certified and sworn to by a well-known firm of public accountants—that statement which had been prepared a week before in anticipation of the new paper which Mr. Archer

was preparing to float. The advertisement also gave for the first time in the public prints a brief history of the Real Republican movement, its beginning, its purpose, its progress. In such glowing terms was this done that Jerry's ward and committee organization seemed to march across the page like a magnificent army panoplied and equipped for battle.

Last of all was a personal card from Jerry. He wrote:

"MY FAITH IS IN THE COMMON PEOPLE. IF THEY THINK MY EFFORTS DESERVE SUPPORT THEY WILL SUPPORT THEM. IF THEY DO NOT, THEN I HAVE EITHER FAILED TO MAKE MY PURPOSE CLEAR OR I HAVE NOT BEEN MAN ENOUGH FOR THE JOB. I SHALL NOT, ON THAT ACCOUNT, HOWEVER, CEASE MY EFFORTS. I HAVE ENLISTED FOR THE WAR, AND LOOK FORWARD TO NOTHING BUT VICTORY!"

It was this final defiant cheer of Jerry's in the face of possible, even probable, defeat that seemed to make the appeal heroic, and caught the imagination of the people.

The young leader himself had passed a sleepless night, and looked anxiously for the first indication or hint as to what the popular reaction might be from the way the papers themselves handled the story. It had not occurred to him that both the actual publication and the manner of handling would be a serious test of the character of the newspapers themselves. Yet such was the fact. Like going concerns of any sort, they were all more or less at the mercy of the men who controlled their credits at the banks, and these were subject to pressure from the same source that had threatened the Archers, yet to their honour be it said that not one of the morning journals ignored the news value of the story. Some, however, played it up with greater enthusiasm than others.

Equal prominence, too, with the sensational defiance and appeal of the Tool Works was given to the

political feature of the news. The information that such an organization as the Real Republicans had been quietly developing for more than a year and was now complete in every detail, was treated as of the greatest importance, while the most striking principle of the new movement was instantly singled out. This was insistence upon the fact that it was a Republican enterprise and Republican only, and would offer no ticket at the general election if its candidates were beaten for the Republican nomination at the primaries.

This, from the standpoint of a reformer's campaign, was as bold an innovation as the Tool Works announcement, and there was a note of challenge in it, that like Jerry's final word, appealed strongly to the imagination. One of the headline writers invented a caption to emphasize this idea, which afterward became a sort of slogan. It was:

"A Republican Committee for a Republican City."

It must be confessed, however, that this feature provoked objection from that group of enlightened students of city government which no doubt represented the most independent and intelligent body of voters in the city. These argued hotly that a programme of partisanship in municipal government was absurd.

"But not in Philadelphia," answered others. "Where the high tariff obsession is so strong, we have got to swallow it whole or be beaten by it."

For a few hours, indeed, Philadelphia talked so much about the political features of the morning's sensation that there was almost danger that the financial necessities of the Archer Tool Works would be overlooked. Notwithstanding the distractions provided by telephone calls, interviews of reporters for the afternoon papers, and the frequent demands of his subordinates in the shops for information or instructions, Jerry put in some of the most wretched hours of suspense he had ever known.

It was not until after the 12 o'clock whistle had blown that the first straw of hope was wafted in at the door.

It came in the form of a huge Italian in overalls whom Jerry recognized as one of his lathe men. Bashfully the man produced a greasy and sweat-stained wallet from which he dug out a thick layer of bills, and laid them down on the desk.

"Tree hundra doll! I lenda you dat, Mista Arch," he said proudly, with a garlic breath.

"Three hundred dollars!" Jerry leaped up with a bound.

"Tony!" he exclaimed, "you're a brick!" and he wrung the huge hand of toil until Tony was embarrassed and backed away. "You giva me receipt for him," the workingman suggested.

"Receipts? I'll give you the note of the Archer Tool Works, signed by its president and treasurer. Here, Paul," and Jerry hurried the man into his father's office, where Paul happened to have been at the moment, "here's your first loan, three hundred dollars from one of our own men."

Neither Henry T. Archer nor Paul embarrassed Tony by shaking hands; such an action would have been as strained and unnatural with them as it was spontaneous and characteristic in Jerry. But Paul made an immediate dive for his own desk to get a pad of the new note form that, like the advertising, had been prepared during the night in anticipation of the hoped-for popular response.

"Six'a per cent.," Tony murmured contentedly, "Six-a per cent.," and went out with his note tightly clutched in his hand, but stopped on the way to the bench where his luncheon waited, to exhibit it to the other employees whom he met timidly inquiring their way to the office while with toil-stained hands they lovingly fingered their own hoarded funds.

These were all men of foreign blood, who, carrying their money about their person as the only safe bank, were in position to make immediate investment, and by half-past 12 seven such had exchanged their money for notes. Word came in, too, that hundreds of other

employees were reading the advertisement over their luncheon and pondering it as they read and munched. Discussions were also arising, some denouncing the project bitterly as a scheme to rob the workmen or to get them under obligations which would render them helpless in the event of labour troubles, while others—usually quieter, better-balanced men and those who had been in the employ of the company longer, answered these railers with scorn.

Just before 10 o'clock the offices were besieged by a small army of two or three dozen workmen who, living in the neighbourhood, went home to their midday meal and had now brought back their savings or part of them to lend to the company. They all watched interestedly while a clerk filled out the notes, and Paul and his father signed them, and they went away proudly as if they belonged to the firm, but not before a photographer had snapped the group for the last editions of the evening papers.

These investors, too, told of other workmen who had sent their wives down to the savings bank for their money, with instructions to bring it into the office this afternoon.

"I hadn't thought of our own men, hardly," exclaimed Jerry joyously, when this small rush was over. "That shows it's going to be a success, father," and there was a cackling note of triumph in his voice.

"Shows a fine spirit, I must say," conceded Mr. Archer. "Still, we might have expected our own men to stand by us. I'm not going to venture to hope much until I see the first \$50 from outside. We should have had some response this morning, I think."

"Give 'em time to think and to go to the banks and get their money and time to get here," argued Jerry, who after the strain of the night and morning was now in exuberant spirits. "If you and Paul want a luncheon to-day you had better get out and grab it now, for I have a hunch you're going to be pretty busy this afternoon."

But before Henry T. Archer could act on his suggestion a lady stood in the office, a lady with very bright eyes, a refined face, and an air of perfect self-possession. She waved a fan of ostrich feathers and was dressed elegantly but coolly in garments of a white and summery thinness, as became the season. This lady was Mrs. John Thomas O'Day. She was known as a society woman, and was supposed to have no more than a faddish interest in matters of civic import.

"Ah, Jerry," she laughed, playing with the ostrich feathers assiduously. "What a bold, bad fighter you are, aren't you? Here!" and the fan was abandoned for a moment while both hands went into the gayly-striped bag upon her arm. "Here is my check for \$15,000. I'll take a little piece of your loan if you don't mind."

"Mrs. O'Day! You surprise me! You reproach me!" exclaimed Jerry. "I hadn't thought it of you."

"No," laughed Mrs. O'Day, "nobody gives me credit for much conscience," and her diction was rich and charming, "but I have a little. Do you remember the time I served on that milk committee? Well, then, we women found our way blocked by the kind of beasts of the jungle that are fighting you now. Ever since I've been rattled waiting to take a shot at those creatures, and here's the first chance to fire a gun."

Mrs. O'Day tossed her check upon the table. Jerry took it up and passed it to Paul who had come forward just then with his father.

"Do you know," went on Jerry, while his father and Paul were attending to the matter of the note, "I almost forgot your kind of people—you near-rich, as it were. I expected to have to make up our loan entirely from the fifty, the hundred-dollar people."

"And you may at that," observed Mrs. O'Day. "Generally I think our class—(she said clawss)—will be deaf to an appeal like yours. They will think you're exhibitioning."

"Oh, I hope so," declared Jerry, and so seriously

that Mrs. O'Day laughed merrily. "I do want this," he went on, "if it succeeds, to be the most democratic thing ever. I want it to demonstrate that the working people and the small tradesman class of Philadelphia are not only sympathetic and appreciative but capable of the noblest sort of response."

"I'm sure I trust they may," prattled Mrs. O'Day. "I think our class generally will be deaf enough to satisfy your fondest hopes for them."

It was Jerry's turn to laugh. "You are the first subscriber from outside our own Works," he said, handing over the signed note. "Thank you very much, you hearten us wonderfully, and yet, you know, I had expected that the first outside money would be from a scrub-lady or somebody like that, bringing her little hoard of savings, you know."

"Here she is," whispered Mrs. O'Day from behind her fan.

A flushed, pudgy woman, with perspiration oozing from all visible pores, had appeared in the doorway. Jerry hurried over hopefully to greet the newcomer and was prepared to be dreadfully disappointed if she had not come to subscribe to the loan.

"Is it here ye take the money?" the woman inquired, looking about her and at Mrs. O'Day rather suspiciously.

"It is. I am Jeremiah Archer."

"And are ye that same?" exclaimed the woman, lifting both hands in a sort of benediction. "I am Bridget O'Riley, of the Fourt' Ward."

"The mother of Dennis?" inquired Jerry, shaking hands delightedly.

"That same. I left him mindin' me little shop while I brung me money over. Aw, what is it, Mr. Jerry, them rich divils is tryin' to do to ye? Ye'll never let 'em bate ye, will ye, darlin'? Dinnis has the division lined up like a lot of sodgers. He was after comin' over here himself. 'No,' I said, 'I'll not trust ye with me money. Ye'll go shpendin' it on a funeral or a wake

or somethin' like that in the division. This is for Mr. Archer,' I says, 'to fight them rich scum with,' I says, and so here I am, Mr. Jerry, and would ye please turn around a minute till I can get at me money."

Jerry blushed and turned, and Mrs. O'Day relieved his embarrassment by beckoning.

"I'm jealous," she whispered. "You're making ever so much more fuss over this woman than over me."

Jerry, beaming and joyous, chuckled back, "Well, she's making ever so much more fuss over me."

"Right-o!" admitted Mrs. O'Day drily. "I should be going, of course, but the temptation to stay and see a little bit of the show——"

"Stay; oh, stay, if you'd like," responded Jerry. "Take a seat by that window there; it's the coolest spot there is—and take a look occasionally and tell me if you see the people of Philadelphia beginning to pour up to our door in any very large numbers."

"Are ye goin' to take me money, or not, young Mr. Archer?" inquired the voice of Mrs. O'Riley, reproachfully, but good-naturedly.

"Oh, certainly," responded Jerry, and hurried across to his desk again. Mrs. O'Riley, it appeared, had fifty dollars, mostly in one-dollar bills.

"Wonderful! Wonderful, Mrs. O'Riley. Now wasn't that just the nicest thing of you," he glowed tactfully, and then, passing her money over to Paul and his clerk, Jerry, in the excess of his good feeling, turned and introduced Mrs. Bridget O'Riley to Mrs. John Thomas O'Day. The introduction came as a surprise to both, but it was not Mrs. O'Riley who was at first embarrassed and ill at ease.

"Sure and I'm pleased to meet you, mum," said that good woman. "If ye'd see the fine street Mr. Archer's makin' them put down in our ward, where was nothin' before but a rotten old alley the people died in like rats, ye'd know why I'm comin' so far on this hot day to throw me money through an Archer Tool Works windy."

"Yes, yes; I can quite understand," stammered Mrs. O'Day, recovering from the vigour of Mrs. O'Riley's moist but cordial handshake, but still left rather breathless by the good woman's volubility. "Tell me, Mrs. O'Riley," she managed to inquire presently, "do you think many people will do as you have done, and bring their money to Mr. Archer?"

"Many?" inquired Mrs. O'Riley, suddenly vehement. "As many as has got fifty dollars to their name will be comin'. The rich scum are tryin' to strangle Jerry Archer; but the poor'll fight for 'im. Did ye ever hear how he tackled a policeman down in the Fift' Ward? Did ye hear about the streets and the playgrounds, and the fight he's makin' about water pressure down there? Did ye hear of anything for the last two years that was for the benefit of the common peepule and Jerry Archer not in it up to his ears? Why, the man's gettin' to be a byword in this town—a positive byword, ma'am," and Mrs. O'Riley turned to gaze fondly at the auburn head of Jerry as he stood talking to a pale little woman who held a savings bank book in her hand. "Look at th' darlin'," went on Mrs. O'Riley. "Though I never seen 'im before to-day, I love him a'ready. Ain't he got a takin' way with him, though?"

Mrs. O'Day, remembering her fifteen thousand dollar check and Mrs. O'Riley's fifty dollars, and the business upon which Jerry was now so industriously bent, had to laugh at an unconscious pun; but she had also to make it very clear to Mrs. O'Riley that she agreed with her entirely as to the attractiveness of Jerry. Indeed, it seemed to Mrs. O'Day to augur very favourably for Jerry's career as a future leader of democracy that an obscure woman away off in one of the crowded river wards should know so much about the young man and sing his praises so highly.

"In fact," she suggested presently, "Jerry Archer is endowed with what I should call a percolative personality."

"A-a-a? O, indade, mum," and Mrs. O'Riley blinked and swallowed hard. "Percolative? Oh, very percolative indeed."

"They're not crowding in exactly, Jerry," remarked Mrs. O'Day, after a look out of the window. "I think I must be going."

"No, but they're beginning to trickle along quite regularly now," responded Jerry, still buoyant, "and we've made a very good start for the first hour of the afternoon, thanks to you."

"The best of luck," said Mrs. O'Day, offering her hand.

"And sure, ye'll have it, Mr. Archer," declared Bridget, offering her hand also, and then making a large and perspiring wake to the departure of Mrs. O'Day, for that lady, in the excess of good feeling born of these few exchanges with Mrs. O'Riley, had offered to take the worthy woman home in her car—a proposal which the latter had no more thought of declining than she had of jumping out of the window to get downstairs.

On the way over to the Fourth Ward in Mrs. O'Day's luxurious canopied car the two became quite chatty, and Mrs. O'Riley, taking advantage of proximity to estimate her new acquaintance quite shrewdly from the tip of her white kid toe to the tiny fine network of wrinkles under her luminous eyes, guessed that lady's age at forty-seven, and assayed her heart as sound and good, notwithstanding the corroding effects of wealth. She also decided that Mrs. O'Day was quite a capable person and entitled therefore to ambition, and it detracted nothing from the favourableness of Mrs. O'Riley's appraisal to assume that there might be some ulterior motive in the rich woman's kindness.

This assumption took form in her farewell speech as she remarked:

"They do say, ma'am, that politics makes strange bedfellows, and I never thought I'd ride with the likes of you. But I'm not so gaspin' breathless over it that

I ain't much obliged, and any time ye'll be runnin' for office, ma'am—the women'll be votin' pretty soon, don't ye think—any time ye will, ye can count on the vote of Bridget O'Riley. My son's the leader here for Mr. Archer, and we'll deliver the division for ye, ma'am—yes, an' the ward, too."

Mrs. O'Day laughed, flushed, and demurred.

"An' thank ye again for the ride." Mrs. O'Riley dropped a fat and wabbling curtsy.

"You're very welcome, I'm sure," smiled Mrs. O'Day, and was driven away waving her fan cordially to the still curtsying Mrs. O'Riley.

At the time the two women left the office of the Archer Tool Works, it was true as Mrs. O'Day had laughingly remarked, that there were as yet no evidence of crowding about the doors of the company office, but it was also true, as Jerry had replied, that people were trickling in with money to offer in exchange for Tool Works notes. They were coming as rapidly as one every three or four minutes. From about 2 o'clock on the interval between subscribers began to be reduced in an accelerating ratio, and noting that these were women and wives of the working class, coming here direct from the savings banks as witnessed by the passbooks in their hands, gave Jerry an idea. He turned and began to call up the afternoon papers.

"Could you get it into your last edition that our office will be open until 10 o'clock to-night to receive subscriptions of working people?" he asked the first city editor.

"Yes. How's it coming?" responded the editor.

"Fine!" boasted Jerry. "Subscribers are going past my door in a steady stream."

"Wonderful!" echoed the editor in honest amazement.

The same request was made of the other editors, with ensuing conversations more or less similar, and it seemed to Jerry that almost by the time he had finished with the telephone there was a perceptible increase

in the frequency with which subscribers to the popular loan appeared. In fact, they were coming faster than they could be handled and a line began to form, marshalled by clerks and stenographers who headed it up to a window where the money was received and counted, and then passed the subscribers on to a desk where Paul and Henry T. Archer signed and issued the notes.

Jerry, exercising a general supervision, greeting acquaintances in the line, making new ones where opportunity offered and appearing here, there, and everywhere, busy as the hostess at a children's party.

It was about this time that a most astonishing and delightful message came to Jerry from the outside. It told him that a line was forming at the Star of Liberty Savings Bank two blocks away in the Forty-ninth Ward.

"Good!" laughed Jerry excitedly. "That's one of Buckingham's banks, isn't it?"

"Sure thing," declared his informant, who was none other than our old friend, Officer No. 53241, who happened to be off duty this afternoon.

"Drawing money out of one of Buckingham's pockets to put it into ours," commented Jerry, and, reflecting on such a state of affairs, laughed some more and went over to whisper the glad news to Paul and his father.

"They're holdin' 'em up over there, takin' as long as possible to give each one their money, so they can shut 'em off short at closin' time," explained the officer when Jerry came back.

"They'll start a run on themselves, with that sort of tactics, if they're not careful," observed Jerry, and looking at his watch noted that it was twenty minutes to three.

And a run on the Star of Liberty was exactly what resulted. The paying teller, pursuing his mistaken strategy, had worked more and more slowly, the line had backed up farther and farther till it passed out of the door and turned the corner into Lazare Street, thus

advertising its existence to everybody in the neighbourhood.

"What's it mean?" people asked curiously.

"Folks pullin' their money out of the Star," was the answer.

"What's the matter? Ain't it safe?"

"Search me!"

One or two lugubrious nods and shrugs accompanying words like these and the work was done. Like an alarm of fire in a powder mill the rumour spread through that half-foreign district that there was a run on the Star of Liberty Savings Bank and that it was going to fail. The news passed from lip to lip; it was carried by customers from little shop to little shop, and then taken home where it went up the rickety stairs of tenements and was shouted across areaways and through open windows. Women dropped their washing and with sudsy fingers dug their precious bank books out from under mattresses and obscure holes in closets, and hurried bareheaded to the bank.

Almost by the time Jerry Archer had made his shrewd prognostication, the line had begun to receive accessions of scores of excited depositors and the anxious questions, the vague, nervous answers, the fear, the incipient panic in the back of the line was spreading to the front. When at 3 o'clock the bank employees tried to shut the doors they were unable to do so. A mob of wildly gesticulating, screaming, scrambling women broke past clerks and the watchman and, pressing their way in, fought with hungry eyes for a place nearer the windows where piles of money still lay in sight.

The bank officials, frightened and uncertain, called up the office of Mr. Buckingham for instructions. Mr. Buckingham, returned to his office but half an hour since from his week in Canada, was just getting hold of the odds and ends of what had been happening in his absence.

He had read the Tool Works advertisement with a

sneering laugh. Now he heard that there was a run on one of his savings bank branches. This angered him. It was silly, it was absurd. It was *lèse majesté*. That any one, even those poor ignorant fools of foreigners out there in an industrial district, should doubt the integrity of a Buckingham bank was preposterous, it was insane!

"Pay 'em off," he roared angrily, "Keep the doors open all night if necessary; put on extra tellers. Pay 'em off. Send a truckload of Reserve notes out there under guards and pile 'em up to the ceiling where they can see 'em, and speculate on whether we've got the money to pay 'em or not."

Thus boldly, and with flaunting pride, did Mr. Buckingham meet the issue; and it was not till something like an hour later that he was informed that the reason the depositors in his Star of Liberty Savings Bank were withdrawing their money was to loan it to the Archer Tool Works. Then the financier burst into a fit of rage beside which his other explosion had been as the discharge of a popgun to the roar of a sixteen-inch howitzer.

"Close the doors! Stop it! Shut 'em off," he bel-lowed. "Get the police reserves out there. Clear 'em off the premises."

This was done, and it had the effect of increasing the panic at a time when the back-fire of simple explanations of the first withdrawals had begun to cool the crowd madness; but now there was no cooling it, and in consequence a long line of angry men and women camped stolidly through the afternoon and night in front of the Star of Liberty, determined now to have their money on the morrow at whatever cost of inconvenience.

Up at the Tool Works, too, excitement reigned; but it was hilarious excitement, for the flow of subscribers to the loan was steadily increasing. To speed up the issue of the notes a clerk stood now on each side of Paul and another pair on each side of Mr. Archer. One

clerk advanced a blank for signature, the other, blotter in hand, laid it on the fresh ink-scrawl and slipped away the note. These signed in blank were now passed into the teller's cage and filled in and issued to subscribers as their money was passed over. The tellers worked nervously; both Paul and his father were suffering from writer's cramp; and the line still grew. It stretched out along the corridor, wound around and down the stairs, and backed up the shady side of the street.

It was an eager, good-natured line; but the day was hot, the atmosphere dusty, and waiting unpleasant. Jerry, however, continued to assume that every bringer of money was a personal guest, and his or her comfort to be looked after as such. He provided huge buckets of iced lemonade, and set a force of boys and young women to passing it; palm-leaf fans were also provided, and with his own personality radiating the cheer he felt, he kept the waiting line in good humour, and gave to the entire function the flavour of a lawn party.

It was apparent, too, that a very clear sense of what they were there for pervaded the whole line of subscribers. They were coming to the rescue of a battler for the people, against an arrogant and tyrannical power which had sought ruthlessly to crush him. This resolution to come thus to the rescue had grown in each breast separately, and some of them must have set their faces toward the Works dubiously and with misgivings in their hearts. But when they got there and found ahead of them a line of others upon a similar errand of faith and good will, that and the electric contagion which flows from any crowd swept away every doubt and fused all feelings in a great wave of enthusiasm.

This situation created also a sense of kinship in the subscribers. These people were strangers to each other; they came from all over the city; they were of many walks of life and nationality; some were men or women of the middle class, in fairly prosperous cir-

cumstances, who had come resolutely to deposit a thousand or five hundred dollars of their reserve. Others had barely been able to scrape up the fifty-dollar minimum, but there they were, united in what all felt to be a common and a worthy cause.

The ice of non-acquaintance was easily broken. They chattered volubly to each other. There was a strong savour of patriotic feeling in the line. About 5 o'clock somebody started to sing "America." It rose along the hall, echoed queerly down the turn of the stairs and flowed out into the street, where, after a single stanza, it was melted into the "Star Spangled Banner," and the increased volume of tone indicated that, with the educational effect of the war on the public mind, there was greater enthusiasm for the more martial song.

Photographers were out taking pictures of the queue for the morning papers when this singing broke out. News of it went downtown by them. The spirit of a crusade hung over the whole proceeding now, and the crowd grew steadily. At 6 o'clock Jerry's corps of lemonade dispensers added sandwiches to their stock of creature comforts; for work, work as fast as the tellers could, it was evident some of these waiting people would be very late for dinner.

But by 7 o'clock the line had shortened and the end of the work of receiving subscriptions for the day seemed near. However, about 8 o'clock, there came another influx of subscribers from all parts of the town. These were from homes where husbands and wives, separated during the day, had time to consult together at supper time, and reading that subscriptions would be received that night, had hurried over to help throw a fear into the common enemy by making a big first day. There were several hundred of such people in all and they swelled the lines, so that it was half-past 10 o'clock before the last money was received and the last note passed out for the day.

Henry T. Archer and Paul, who had been catching

up on signatures from the time when the system was changed so they merely signed the notes in blank, sat listening to the click of the adding machine and waiting for the day's total to be announced. Jerry was talking over the telephone in tones that, although exultant, were none the less low and honeyed, making it comparatively easy to call up a vision of the party on the other end.

"Eighty-four thousand three fifty," announced Henry T., reading the figures on a slip the cashier had just handed to him. There was a gulp in the old patrician's voice and a suspicious shininess in his eyes. "I wouldn't have believed it possible."

"Looks like victory, hey?" demanded Jerry, who had just hung up the 'phone and slipped to the door as the figures were announced.

"Victory? I should say!" and Henry T. sneezed violently, for he was very much melted. "I wouldn't have been without this experience for anything," he reflected. "It's almost made a democrat out of me."

"Jerry, old man, you're a wiz!" was Paul's admiring comment.

"Did you hear 'em sing?" inquired Jerry happily.

"Did I?" responded the brother. "When you can get people to sing while they're throwing their money at you, your place as a friend of the people is pretty well established, I should say." All three joined in the laugh.

There remained but to tell the newspapers what the result had been and the day was closed.

"Oh, the blessed newspapers!" exclaimed Jerry. "What would we do without them?"

"To-morrow?" speculated Henry T. Archer, lines of anxiety coming into his face again. "We must have at least a hundred thousand more to-morrow. I wonder if we will get it, or if we've skimmed the cream to-day."

"Twice as much to-morrow," declared Jerry. "Phil-

delphia is not a city that anybody can stampede in a day."

"To-morrow's the real test," agreed Paul. "I predict that to-morrow we win or lose. To-morrow they'll either overwhelm us or they'll lie down on us altogether."

It was quite true that the issue was not yet determined. Hundreds and thousands of individual decisions hung in the balance. The people of Philadelphia who had it in their power to save the Archer Tool Works if they would were in what a very eminent authority has termed a psychological mood. What had happened in the afternoon round the Tool Works and round the Star of Liberty Savings Bank had been mere flurries; they had not reached out over the city.

Whether the Archer notes were a safe investment or not was still a subject for individual differences of opinion, and the relationship between loaning money to the Tool Works and participating in a movement to overthrow contractor government in the city had not yet been clearly discerned by many who were deeply interested in the latter enterprise. That stimulus and contagion of enthusiasm which comes of seeing a considerable number of people marching in the same direction and singing songs or shouting challenges as they go had not yet been furnished to these thousands of citizens who, isolated in their homes, still debated their decision and thereby held in their hands the issues of victory or defeat for the Archer Tool Works and Jeremiah Thomas Archer.

CHAPTER XXX

TIDES OF BATTLE

THERE is a sheep-like element in the human mind. It waits to see what others do, and then it follows. Hundreds of personal decisions hinged on what the morning papers might reflect concerning the popular acceptance or non-acceptance of the startling innovation proposed by the Tool Works.

To the anxious Archers the dawn came slowly on that July morning. The sun rose lazily, as if, like the dwellers in that brick-coloured splotch upon the landscape called Philadelphia, he were too wearied with the mere exertion of awakening to be expected to do a day's work besides. Nevertheless, he went on about his business, and by 8 o'clock had struggled through some hours of haze and turned a red and fiery eye upon the statue of William Penn overtopping the City Hall.

Daylight, meantime, had brought the newspapers, and these, it appeared, by the simple act of printing the happenings of the day before, had supplied the necessary power in the form of ideas for sweeping those hundreds of doubters over the line of decision. The story of the remarkable success of the first day's subscriptions, the pictures of the queue, the description of Jerry Archer fraternizing with the subscribers while his father and brother got writer's cramp signing notes, the account of the lemonade and the palm-leaf fans and the sandwiches; a picture of Mrs. O'Riley as the first outside subscriber, and an interview with her in her little store; the account of the singing of "America"—all these were contributing forces to the widespread making up of minds.

And there was something to laugh about, too, in the morning news. The fact that a run on a Buckingham savings bank had been precipitated by withdrawals to take up loans the Buckingham commercial banks were known to have refused, provoked the laughter. It also occasioned jeers among those who did not like Buckingham, which, by the way, reminds us of something, and that was that Jerry had promised Ruth he would not mention her father's name. He had kept his word faithfully both in his sign and his advertising. But the papers were under no such restrictions in their news columns. Most of them promptly put the cap on Mr. Buckingham, and everybody saw that it fitted.

In consequence, with the onus of responsibility clearly upon the man, the incident of the run upon the Star of Liberty made an extra amount of talk in business and financial circles. On the bourse when it opened, in the offices of trust and bonding companies and around the long boards of directors' meetings the phenomena came up for discussion. Not that there were many among these who felt that the Archer popular loan should succeed; but there were many who doubted the wisdom of Buckingham in bringing things to such a pass.

"Puts the money interests in a false light," objected one bank president, with a fine distaste upon his face. "Makes people dissatisfied and suspicious. Very bad policy! Very bad!"

"The worst thing is, it teaches them their own power," commented the general manager of a trust company.

Buckingham himself got early to his office on this eventful day, as if with a premonition of something dangerous impending and made unpleasant by the feeling that for once events had played him false. He sensed that there had been misjudgment somewhere and he roughed several of his lieutenants sharply with his tongue while getting the reins of business into his hands for the morning.

Out at the Archer Tool Works, however, all was now serene and joyful. When Jerry reached the Works at about the time when the sun's rays had got the range of the statue of William Penn, he found people waiting before the closed door, and a sprinkling of subscribers continued through the morning till 10:30 o'clock when, having had time to arrive from the banks, they began to come in crowds. By 12 o'clock it had become necessary to multiply their receiving organization by the addition of two extra tellers and the line was split in three as it emerged from the head of the stairs, while Henry T. and Paul were signing their names for dear life.

By this same hour of 10:30, too, an observant eye would have noticed at intervals of a minute or so, one depositor after another emerging from the side door of the Star of Liberty and marching straight down to the Archer Tool Works. The run on the savings bank continued, but the panicky spirit had gone out of it. The withdrawers were now actuated by a clear intelligent purpose to get 6 per cent. at Archers' instead of 3.65 at the Star; and, incidentally, to take their money away from Buckingham, so he could no longer use it to fight their own friends. It was astonishing and gratifying to see how quickly people of every rank and degree grasped this element of the situation.

"We'll take in \$150,000 to-day," chuckled Jerry joyously.

"More than that," said one of the cashiers. "Notice the difference in these people to-day. They're bringing larger amounts. Look, \$300 is the smallest note I've issued in fifteen minutes. Lots of them are for \$1,000. Twice I've had \$5,000, and look, here's one now for \$7,000."

Jerry glanced at the figures and looked out through the window. The cashier was right. There was an increasing number of more prosperous looking people in the line, and the dignity of a loftily conceived purpose was written as clearly upon their faces as upon the others.

"It's great," he murmured. "Great! The people of Philadelphia are coming out to help us. It's notice to Buckingham and to all the rest of the bosses that whenever the issue is clear between friends and enemies, the people will stand by their friends."

"Jerry!" It was the voice of Henry T. calling his son. The president of the Tool Works had come out of his private office and stood smiling. "I've just had a phone from the Black Diamond people. They tell us not to worry about that \$30,000 note due to-morrow. Say they find they will be able to renew it."

"Hal Hal Hal!" laughed Jerry. "They must have heard something. What was it they told you day before yesterday?"

"That it must be met without fail."

"And what did you tell them just now?"

"Told them we expected to meet it when due and would need no further accommodations from them. In fact, that we expected to withdraw our account."

"What did they say to that?"

"Well, it sounded like somebody having a fit when I hung up," chortled Henry T.

The telephone took Mr. Archer away again and he came back laughing once more.

"Who this time?" divined Jerry.

"Inland State," chuckled his father. "Called up to offer us money."

"Inland State? We've never had any business with them, have we?"

"No; but that shows how the wind is blowing."

"They've decided that the people are pretty good backers," observed Paul.

"And that a reputation for integrity and sound business, built up through four generations, cannot be blown away in a single whiff of any man's breath," insisted Henry T., who could not allow his sons to forget that it was the Archer reputation on which the whole project turned.

"I can't overlook that for a minute, Dad," assented

Jerry. "You're the fulcrum on which everything has been moved."

All day the lines sifted past the cashier's windows; all day money came in and notes went out, and all day the telephones rang, money was offered, accommodations were proposed and half the financial district seemed wheedling at the ears of Henry T. Archer. But he had a positive "no" for all offers, a "no" that varied in courtesy as the treatment of these same financial powers had varied in courtesy to him during the week of stress through which he had just passed.

"The people have saved us. The people shall carry our loans hereafter," was the one unvarying element in his answer.

"But there's a big difference between 6 per cent. and 5."

"A big difference, yes, but 1 per cent. is not too much to pay for independence and protection when there are pirates like Willard Buckingham cruising around."

Willard Buckingham a pirate? And so denominated by one of Philadelphia's aristocracy of manufacture to one of Philadelphia's aristocracy of finance! Why, for years both these aristocracies had whispered the name of Buckingham with awe or fear if not with reverence. Astonishing! But, of course, it was true that the man who had thus taken the name of Buckingham in vain was one who had recently fought with him and won the fight; for there was now no doubt that the Archer popular loan had proven an amazing success.

Money came and came. The next day the number of subscribers had fallen off a little; the fever of the rush was over, but the volume of subscriptions was larger than ever, for men with more money were responding now and their subscriptions came in considerable sums.

Another interesting development from that first day was that the run on the Star of Liberty spread to other Buckingham savings banks throughout the city, and to

some of his commercial banks also, that were of a local or neighbourhood character. In fact, wherever there was a bank with the name of Buckingham appearing in the list of officers or directors printed on the window, it seemed to invite hostile attack from certain stratas of society.

Nor was this feeling confined to the workingmen and the small shopkeeper class of bank depositors. It had its counterpart in higher financial levels, in which were rifts and swirls of opinion that criticized Buckingham harshly.

The result of all this talk was a series of bad days for Buckingham. There were many announced defections from his support; there was withdrawing of accounts, the shifting of deposits, and the spectacle of men readjusting their own banking and credit to make themselves secure from any such assault as had been made upon the Archers. Even the men who had thoughtlessly participated in this one particular drive against the credit of a single firm now saw the injustice and iniquity of it; and began to realize that this power, held despotically, might some day be hurled against themselves.

The fact was that Buckingham's own ruthlessness had created a greater feeling of financial unrest than Philadelphia had ever known except in times of panic. Things reached their legitimate climax in proposals for the organization of a new bank, with every strong interest in the city outside of those affiliated with Buckingham subscribing stock in it, till it was openly boasted that the bank would open its doors with a capital of five million and close the first day with twenty-five millions of deposits. Henry T. Archer was to be elected one of the vice-presidents, and the People's National was to be the name of the new institution.

As for Buckingham, once the first heat of his rage was cooled, he felt himself a very much injured party, and watched the swiftly moving plans for the launching of

the People's National with dismay and chagrin, while reflecting gloomily on man's ingratitude to man. Had he not always been a faithful trustee? Had his ventures ever lost a dollar for any man who intrusted money to them? Had he not taken his fiduciary responsibilities seriously and maintained his position as a financial adviser with dignity and impartiality, fighting always the foes of vested wealth and sending always the sacred cause of the investor? To be sure he had. Why, then, all this pother and captious criticism? Especially why the cruel and ugly things they were saying about him?

His wife was finding things unpleasant in social spheres and complained of being all but snubbed by women whose husbands Buckingham could buy twice over with his yearly income. Ruth, too, was unhappy. The girl did not say so, but the banker caught her watching him with sad eyes, and looking as if there was something on her mind of which she wished to speak but dared not for fear of having disagreeable fears confirmed.

It was all deucedly unpleasant, if any one wished to know. As a matter of fact, however, it appeared that no one did wish to know; no one inquired of him how he did, except men who were under obligations to him or held their prosperity at his pleasure. Truth to tell, Buckingham was not only having a fit of loneliness, but discovering, indeed, that he was on a high and isolated peak of unpleasant eminence that made loneliness inevitable.

The feeling that somehow he had miscalculated, came to him at times. Could this be possible? Had he, most careful, most calculating of men, had he somehow muddled things and got power without happiness? And was he to realize this just at the time, too, when he had been humbled by discovering that his power was ever so much less absolute than it seemed? Reflections like these together with his usual business responsibilities kept the mind of Buckingham fairly busy

until at last he decided on summoning Jerry Archer once more to his presence.

"The pipe of peace or a challenge to personal combat! The young man laughed when his secretary brought him the word that Mr. Buckingham wished to see him; but responded to the invitation to call with his usual bland assurance. He had successfully defied Mr. Buckingham and could afford a cavalier air. Moreover, he had decided that he would seize this occasion to come out from behind the bush and boldly ask the man of millions for the hand of his daughter in marriage.

"After which, if he says No, I shall tell him I am going to take her and I will!" programmed Jerry in the militancy of his mood.

CHAPTER XXXI

SYLVY WOULD TELL VICTOR

"Will you please ask Mr. Rollinson if I can see him in his office at twelve-thirty to-morrow when I am off for luncheon?"

The tall, solemn, floorwalker in the gents' furnishing department of Levy's store wondered if he had heard aright, then started and turned suddenly on his stride, to be met by a smile, half-mischievous, half-coaxing, on the face of the new cash girl.

Up to this moment there had been no suspicion on the part of this man whose business it was to shadow Sylvy, that his shadowship had been recognized.

"Why, yes, miss," he responded with that capacity for hasty mental readjustments which was a necessary part of the equipment for his profession. "I'll tell 'im."

"It is very important," assured Sylvy, her smile going away, and a very anxious expression taking its place.

"Yes, yes, I will," replied the man, as if in answer to this anxiety, and then went on with his paces, while Sylvy turned aside to wait for the cash that was evidently coming in a few seconds from a transaction on her right.

The day marked the end of Sylvy's three weeks apprenticeship as a cash girl. To-morrow she was to become a saleslady, and she would have been very elated over the prospect but for the stress and strain of that moral struggle which had just culminated in victory over selfish fear—a victory witnessed by this request to see Mr. Rollinson.

The floorwalker was presently absent from his post

for a short time—for so long, say, as one might require to send a telephone message—and then directly he was back again.

"He will be waiting for you at his office," echoed a voice presently in Sylvy's ear, a voice that came from nowhere in particular, though the floorwalker was strolling past not far away.

From the moment this assurance came, Sylvy found herself thinking more and more of Victor, and less and less of what she had to tell him. He was so big and strong and handsome; his voice was so deep, and yet so capable of tenderness; and—he loved her.

The next forenoon, Sylvy, the saleslady, was all aflutter, and her heart beat so loudly she feared some other of the sales force must hear it, and though she was selling neckties now, meeting people personally, handling the beautiful silks, caressing them lovingly with her hands, and encountering many new experiences, her mind was not closely on the work and its new opportunities.

Once in a while she shot a glance at the floorwalker and wondered if he knew how perturbed she was. His eyes seemed on her more frequently now, and the expression of his face led her to suspect that he did; but that might be only imagination.

Although after many hours, it seemed, 12:30 came, and 12:35 found Sylvy going up in the elevator of the West End Trust Building, and to a certain floor thereof on which she entered timidly at a door, where the eyes of a young lady at a telephone desk and another at a typewriter fell on her curiously, and—admiringly, for Sylvy's beauty was of the sort that poverty, mourning, and the heat of summer, even, could not quench. Besides, the girl's taste in the matter of dress was a very happy one. Her clothes were few, plain, and worn over and over; yet, labour, forethought, and skill that trenched on genius, made them always seem sufficient and somehow to add to her natural attractiveness as successfully as if wealth had been lavished upon them.

To-day, the simple whiteness of her waist—thirty-five cents at Levy's basement bargain counter—and the dainty, V-shaped collar—twenty-nine cents at the same place—afforded a chaste and fitting frame for the appealing roundness of a neck that was white and soft, and a face whose delicate chiselling would have challenged Phidias. The poise of the head, the pliancy of the red-lipped and wistful mouth, the flush of summer on the cheeks, and the glow of suppressed excitement in the dark and heavily lashed eyes combined a picture that now, at nineteen, was just two years more exquisite than that one which had so kindled the imagination of Jerry with his first glimpse of it that day down in the Fifth Ward. Among these additions of two years to Sylvy's features was that larger apprehension of the meaning of life which enriches and ennobles a beautiful face by adding installments of character to mere physical attractiveness.

Men turned to look back at Sylvy in Levy's store. The gents' furnishing department was proud of her. It seemed, therefore, scarcely strange that these girls in Victor Rollinson's outer office let their eyes linger on her, admiring and perhaps envying, as the office boy led her down the wide reception hall, which served also as a work room, to the threshold of the private office.

But Sylvy, here in the lawyer's office, was more than Sylvy yonder in the store. The girl had spirit. In Levy's she was first a pretty little cash girl, scuttling about at the strident call of salespeople, and later a salesgirl herself. Here she was a woman, upstanding, inspired, and self-possessed: and as she framed her petite figure in his doorway, Victor Rollinson could hardly repress a cry of delight. He did repress it, however, so far as the lips were concerned, but the impulse was echoed in his eyes.

Sylvy was unexpectedly composed. Twice, three times before she had been in this office, and each time was bewildered by some strange, incomprehensible element in the atmosphere of its association. Now she

knew what that element was. It took away that sense of timidity and embarrassment which she felt before. In spite of all the bigness and powerfulness of this man he was human and humble, for—he loved her.

Sylvy walked straight up to Mr. Rollinson as he rose, with—yes, little thrills and tremors in her breast—but with, overlaying these, what might be described in rather homely terms as a feeling of comfortable confidence. This was her great strong friend and protector to whom she felt grateful and to whom now she had come to lay a great trouble off from her heart onto his.

“Oh, Mr. Rollinson,” she exclaimed. “You have been so good to me for so long, and I didn’t know it till just recently. I am so grateful and——”

She had wondered what she would say, but her lips, her heart was taking care of that without a hint from her mind, it seemed.

“Tell me,” exclaimed Victor, taking her hand in his and holding it quite casually—but with physical sensations that were for him quite indescribable, “how long have you known and who told you? Mounce—that’s the floorwalker—and I were rather startled yesterday by your apparent understanding that there was some relationship between him and me.”

Sylvy was hardly surprised at this. She had divined that Ruth would not tell.

“For several weeks,” responded Sylvy, with a knowing smile. “Of course, when Mounce followed me round from place to place where I worked, I grew suspicious of him, and afraid, but one day some good friend of yours told me that you had been protecting me, and I wasn’t afraid of him any more. Mr. Rollinson, I haven’t been afraid of anything at all, since that—except one thing,” and immediately a kind of gloom projected itself over her face.

“And what is that?” asked the lawyer quickly, his voice lowered, his face and whole manner reflecting apprehension and an earnest desire to serve.

“I’ve come to tell you,” answered Sylvy soberly,

at the same time wondering that Victor did not ask her to sit down.

Victor's mind, meantime, was speculating wildly somewhat as follows: Who told her? Ruth, of course the day she ran in upon her at Hester Levy's and how much did she tell? Does Sylvy know also that I love her? If she does, and comes like this to see me—there is hope—every hope in the world.

For a moment the lawyer's pulses raced recklessly, and then he realized that until he had definite information on this point, he must proceed with unusual caution or run the risk of frightening away the beautiful little bird that had come at last so trustfully within the reach of his hand.

The rumble of a sliding door disturbed them both.

"Soup is served, suh!" announced the voice of a black servitor who appeared at one side in the doorway of a room lined with books in calf-skin bindings. On what was obviously a library table behind him a white cloth was spread and china, glassware, and silver was set out with service laid for two. Bowls of jellied consommé quivered invitingly while a cold roast chicken, rolls, butter, salads, celery, olives, radishes, fruits, and in fact, every appointment of a most alluring summertime luncheon, greeted the girl's astonished eyes.

In a corner on the floor were two small hampers from which it was evident the materials of the luncheon had just been taken.

"Oh-oo-o-o!" exclaimed Syivy. "Why, it's like fairyland!"

"You were sacrificing your luncheon hour to come to me," said Mr. Rollinson. "It was a simple matter to have a bite sent in. Will you walk in and sit down? Then we can talk and lunch at leisure."

Victor did not explain that, besides being a consideration, the luncheon was also a strategy by which he had designed to make sure of keeping the girl with him for the entire fifty minutes she would have to spare.

"It was so kind and thoughtful of you!" she exclaimed, with an impulsive little clasping of her hands, as she stood in front of one of the two chairs. Victor, behind the chair, was urging it gently forward, but stopped and stooped very near her ear to murmur softly:

"Do you think so?"

What was it made Sylvy sway? It was like some sudden physical weakness and she swayed right toward Victor, but something within her—something automatic that acted as surely as a gyroscope, corrected the sway. Like a pendulum her youthful body swayed back again, and with a rapturous sigh, sank into the chair which Victor was once more urging forward. That whole lateral movement of her body had not traversed an inch of space, and yet it was very real and bulked large in the vivid consciousness of the moment. It was a new phenomenon to the girl and she wondered about it.

The waiter was standing now behind Victor's chair, and as the latter took his seat he directed: "You may wait outside, Jack. I'll ring if we need anything."

The waiter placed upon the table a glass pitcher of some wonderful vari-coloured fruit punch and departed. He had closed the door behind him, but the two windows were open wide, an electric fan was going, and the room was cool and delightful.

"Just like fairyland!" declared Sylvy again, taking up her consommé spoon, for, despite excitement, the sight of the food had made her hungry.

"And you the princess!" suggested Victor happily.

"The stranger princess for whom the great king is always doing something wonderful," amended Sylvy, and lifted a spoonful of the shivering consommé to her lips.

Victor was too thrillingly happy after this long emptiness of waiting, to know whether he ate or not, and in fact barely nibbled at his food. Sylvy, on the other hand, exhibited a healthy young appetite that, undisturbed by qualms or excitement of any sort, did

amazing justice to the abundance provided. With each mouthful, too, it seemed as if her spirits rose until at length they bade defiance to glooms of any sort. She chattered light-heartedly of many things, telling humorously of her experience in necktie salesmanship that morning, and presently venturing to rally Victor on having carried his cash that first day in the store.

"No!" protested Victor laughingly. "It couldn't be possible. Why, I should have felt the radium rays of that wonderful little personality of yours."

"Perhaps I didn't have any radium in my personality that first day," responded Sylvy, also laughing. "You see, I had found out, just a day or two before, about you—about all you!—your looking after me—and when you appeared so suddenly there in the store, I was rather—rather awed and frightened."

"But aren't you awed now?" inquired Victor, mischievously.

"I should be," confessed Sylvy, with a modest blush.

"I almost disapprove of myself that I am not."

"No, no; you should not be," he hastened to assure her, "but I admit my whole conduct has been open to suspicion and you would be entirely within your rights to demand an explanation of me now."

This was uttered like a jest, but was in reality a calculating bit of strategy on Victor's part for her next remark would naturally be a question that opened the way for that confession of his love which he had been waiting nearly two years for an opportunity to make.

But Sylvy, having the advantage of knowing what he did not know that she knew, saw the trap, and was alarmed by its possibilities. For a moment, startled fear stood in her eyes, because this explanation was what she must avoid. When it came, this little paradise into which she had drifted so surprisingly must end. The unescapable, resolutely pursuing past, with its irreconcilable antipathies of race and religion, would come up and open a chasm over which she might not leap, nor reach, nor even look.

"Why, no," she fenced instinctively, "it didn't seem to require explanation. It just seemed perfectly natural in one so wonderfully kind as you were those times when I had to come up to see you about the accident." Sylvy looked up at him archly, between nibblings at a radish that was as red as her own lips, and Victor, not suspecting the ruse, had to laugh at the ease with which such superlative virtue was ascribed to him, but knew that for the time being his confession was corked up in him again.

CHAPTER XXXII

VICTOR WOULD TELL SYLVY

"MR. ARCHER has been doing more remarkable things lately, hasn't he?" remarked Sylvy, by way of getting the conversation on to safe ground.

"I should say," assented Victor, and launched into a brief but glowing description of that young man's character and his political prospects. "He'll be the next Mayor. Nothing can prevent his nomination by his own organization and nothing can prevent his winning, both at the primary and in the election. That popular loan campaign was the most daring and the luckiest stroke imaginable. If it had been Buckingham's design to make Jerry Archer Mayor nothing cleverer could have been designed."

"It seems all so wonderful," sighed Sylvy, her mind going back to that first meeting with Jerry as he came out of the Lafayette Club, his head all wrapped in bandages.

Victor's mood, however, was such that he could only view a discussion of the political prospects of even his dearest friend as a waste of time—when this fair creature sat in front of him. He must get the conversation back to her and her alone.

"You said there was something you wanted to see me about," he remarked, lowering his voice to a tone that was at once tender and considerate; but the result of the inquiry was an instant flight of shadow over the girl's animated features.

"Yes: there was," she admitted quickly. "Only everything here is so pleasant and . . . and happy that I hated to speak of anything that would bring the horrid old outside world in upon us."

"Don't!" exclaimed Victor earnestly. "Don't speak of it! Oh, Sylvy, let us keep ourselves cut off from the outside world. Let us create a little Eden and——" There! It was coming out. Victor had left his chair with impulsive celerity and gone to her side. She, quite unaccountably, was standing and looking up at him with wondering eyes. "Sylvy," he whispered. "I can't hide it any longer. I love you. That's all there is to it. I want you to love me. Will you?"

Will you? The words went through her like the warmth of some melting south wind. Every fibre in her thrilled as if she were a harp that must respond to this breath of love which blew upon her so tenderly. And yet her only response was a look, a look of tenderness and gratitude, but also of reproach—that love should be so blind as not to understand.

Victor showed that he did understand—in part.

"But," he urged impetuously, "let us ignore race, religion, prejudice, everything but ourselves! Let us live for just us two. The supreme fact for us in the universe is just our two existences. Don't consider anything else for a moment now, Sylvy, but just this! Do you—could you love me?"

His swift, impassioned utterance ceased as abruptly as it began; and he stood looking at her, yearning after her, his arms outstretched, though his body never moved. He was waiting for her to come to him.

Sylvy felt a strange percolative sensation travelling over her. She could hardly tell whether she was standing or sitting; it seemed that she might float off into the air, and if she did she knew she would float toward him.

"Do you—could you love me?" he urged again.

This time Sylvy felt the impulse to go to him, to bound into his arms, to pillow her small and often troubled head on his brawny shoulder and know that Victor Rollinson stood between her and everything that might hereafter happen. And this impulse was

love! Love enmeshed and enveloped her! She knew, it now perfectly well, and it startled her more than anything else, for she had thought love impossible just because she knew that these insuperable barriers interposed. But love, it seems, is reckless sometimes of barriers.

"Oh, come, Sylvyl" Victor pleaded earnestly. "Let me take you out of this steaming city; let me send you to the mountains or the seashore; let me give you, give you, give you—out of the depths of my love—clothes, automobiles, servants, leisure, education, music, arts—let me give you anything that money can buy and love can lavish."

His face was bending toward hers, his arms were all but encircling her. The girl's face grew white with fear of surrender. She was like a wounded thing struck on the heart, and barely repressed a cry of pain. Victor saw the struggle, but for a moment love was relentless and gloating. It had won, and it must possess the field.

"Let us cut ourselves off," the lover urged insistently, and his arms were almost touching her; "let us cut ourselves off from the past, from the present, from the——"

The girl's silence was quickened into speech at the same time that she gently eluded the encircling arms. "Cut ourselves off from the future, you were going to say, Victor!" she reproved with a desperate shake of the head. "Don't you see? That is the one thing we cannot cut ourselves off from. It comes drifting down upon us, with all sorts of heart-breaking entanglements that would bring us trouble and destroy our happiness. The teachings, the traditions of thirty generations cannot be overcome by just two people. They would be too—too much for us. Many times two people have tried, and always they have failed. Love is strong, Victor, but it cannot overcome God!"

"But God," debated Victor; "you cannot make me believe that God ordained that two people like you and

me should not love each other. That is mere—mere superstition.”

Sylvy's eyes lighted, and it seemed for a moment changed.

“A Jewess believes what she has been taught,” she answered, with a look of pleading in her eyes—pleading to be understood. “She has to believe it. It is born in her. It cannot be reasoned with.”

This speech and the manner of it, the tone of it, had its effect. The little gasp of pain which seemed to be done up like a capsule in every word of this utterance gave Victor Rollinson for the first time an intelligent conception of the enormity of the task which his love had set for him. Instinctively tactful, he at once checked his importunings. His outstretched arms were lowered, but he stood looking at her with love unutterable in his eyes.

Sylvy was standing with head down, her shoulder toward him, her hand toying with a spoon upon the table. The picture she made was entirely irresistible, and calculated to shatter the strongest resolution.

“Sylvy!” Victor exclaimed, impulsively, coaxingly. “At least tell me one thing. Tell me if you—if you love me.”

Sylvy remained motionless and for a moment there was pensive silence. Then she responded in a faint little voice that was barely recognizable, asking:

“What good will it do? If I say No, it will hurt you. If I say, ye—yes, it will make us both wild to think of the impossibility of it.”

“But it—it isn't impossible, Sylvy,” insisted Victor, in a tone that was almost beseeching. “Besides, it would do me some good just to know that. It would be some satisfaction—a great satisfaction, Sylvy, if you could tell me that my heart has not loved yours so long and ardently without exciting at least a little response in yours.”

The girl's pose remained unaltered, but her heart was

turning. She had never before listened to tones full of melting persuasion.

"Sylvyl" he breathed. "Sylvyl Do you love me?"

Sylvy did not dare to look at him, but her bent head was nodded slightly and her quivering lips framed a response that was meant to be no more than a whisper, but was overtaken by some sudden gust of emotion in her breast. "Yes," she said, with a little cry in the words, "I love you."

But still she did not invite him to approach, and Victor, with his heart leaping like a wild thing in his breast, was nevertheless content to wait. This, his intuition told him, was victory enough for one day. Seeing that he waited, Sylvy turned her luminous eyes up to him and thrust out her hands, with a frank, confiding smile. Victor quickly took the trusting hands in his.

"It has been such a long wait," he said with a sigh.

"It is so wonderful" confessed Sylvy with another.

"I—I feel tired," and she sank into her chair. Victor stood beside her a moment, his hand on her soft little shoulder, and then found his way back to his own place.

"But," exclaimed Sylvy with a little gasp of dismay, "everything is changed now."

"You mean," divined Victor, "that by acknowledging that you love me, everything is changed?"

Sylvy nodded. "It seems to leave me rather—rather disarmed."

"You mean that it lets love inside the breastworks, so to speak?" smiled the conqueror.

"I suppose so," confessed Sylvy, feeling very helpless. "I'm frightened. When—when once love exists—when once we acknowledge it exists—it seems as if nothing else matters. Nothing else in the world."

"Ah! That's what I've been feeling for nearly two years, and it's what I've been trying to tell you for the last ten minutes," said Victor suavely.

"How very, very wonderful you've been!" conceded

the girl. "But now—now I'm distressed. I knew I should be."

"I don't want you to be," declared Victor. "I'm willing to leave our love to work out its own problems. I'm confident it will."

"But it—it must not be permitted to work them out," declared Sylvy, alarmed again and aware that after her vital admission such a speech sounded very unreasonable.

"Suppose we try to forget it," suggested Victor, soothingly but absurdly, and careful that the laughter in his eyes should not seem to be mocking laughter. "Suppose we just try going on with the things that concern us generally. Suppose, for instance, that you tell me what it was you wanted to see me about."

"Something terrible!" responded the girl, pouncing breathlessly on this most disagreeable subject because it helped her to forget this dismal feeling that already she had capitulated, that already her love had made her a traitor and an apostate. "Father is a—there's a terrible plot of the anarchists or the I. W. W. or somebody to kill people and destroy property in Philadelphia—father."

"And your father is in it?" exclaimed Victor, apprehensively.

"Father was in it," emphasized the girl, "but that was weeks ago—before, before little Isadore——"

"Ah, yes," interposed the sympathetic voice of Victor.

"You see," Sylvy explained hastily, "that changed father altogether. It seemed to take all the wildness out of his soul and brain. He has been humbled since, and we have all been drawn very, very close together."

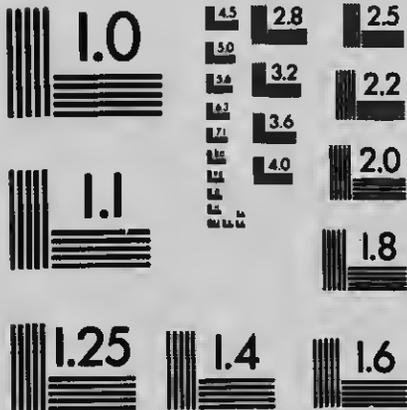
"But about the plot?" broke in the lawyer, his brows knitting, his eyes narrowing, as if he prepared to sift a story from the witness stand.

"You see," Sylvy qualified, "I've never been sure whether it was a real plot or only an imaginary one, and I've put off telling you because I hoped it was



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merely father's raving, till at last my fears got the better of me. Anyway, one night when father was talking wildly, he told me there was a plot to destroy the mills, damage the machinery, blow up buildings, and kill the men higher up who were enslaving the poor."

"Ravings, most likely," decided Victor quickly.

"Do you think so?" inquired Sylvy eagerly, grasping at any straw. "And yet," she went on honestly, "father talked as if they had worked out the details. His part was to be to kill Mr. Buckingham."

"To kill Buckingham!" exclaimed Victor excitedly. "Why, the man was mad who talked like that—mad enough to do the thing!"

"Not now, I am sure," declared Sylvy, with a shudder. "Father is as gentle as a child now. But Levene is not mad. He is cold, merciless, fanatical."

"Levene? And who is Levene?"

Rollinson listened intently while Sylvy told him.

"Exactly the sort to be a planner of crimes for others to commit; that man is dangerous," decided the lawyer instantly. "You should have told me this before, Sylvy." Victor's air was one of reproof, his manner almost stern.

"You think it may be real, then?" the girl asked weakly.

"It may well be. There are ugly ideas in the air these days. Men of wealth and power who have been utterly ruthless in their dealings with labour supply the fuel, while the cruelties and iniquities of a corrupt city government pour on oil, and it needs only the torch of an agitator like Levene to kindle the flame. The result may well be an eruption that none of us can stop this side of bloodshed."

Victor was speaking quickly, in a sort of staccato that Sylvy had never heard before. It was the utterance of a man of force whose faculties are about to transfer their energies from speech to action.

"We must see immediately what the Federal author-

ities know about Levene. He may have a record. We must have him watched, arrested perhaps, and searched; and I must talk at once to your father."

"But you mustn't startle or frighten him; you may make him desperate again," interposed Sylvvy quickly.

"Yes, yes; we must be careful about that," conceded Victor quickly. "Could you—could you bring him here to-night, do you think, to talk to me—on some pretext or other—about Maldono, say?"

"I—I think so in his present mood—yes. But you will not involve him?"

"Sylvvy!" Victor's tone was one of mild reproach. "I shall try to keep him from involving himself. This may be a brainstorm or it may be something serious."

The lawyer's expression was so grave that in sheer search of relief from it Sylvvy's glance turned out the window.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, noting the clock on the City Hall, "it is time for me to be going."

"Must you?" asked Victor, instantly becoming the lover again. "Yes, of course you must, but oh, little girl, it has been so good to have you here. The time was so long coming, it has passed so swiftly, and yet it seems as if an old heaven and an old earth had passed away since you entered that door, and a new one had come—a new earth at least, with heaven in sight just out over the hills of Fairmount Park."

"It does seem as if an awful lot had happened, doesn't it?" she admitted, but was determined to keep the conversation on safe ground. "Thank you so much for the luncheon, and for—for everything." Her eyes took on a look that betrayed her heart most treacherously. "I'll try to bring father to-night," she hastened to add.

She held out her hand; Victor seized it and pressed it to his lips, at which Sylvvy laughed nervously, but was not overquick in drawing the hand away. Eventually, however, the most lingering of handclasps must

end, and Victor walked with her past the audience of stenographers and telephone girls and clear out even to the elevator, where he pressed the button for the car, and when it came, bade her good-bye with as much ceremony as if she had been Ruth Buckingham.

CHAPTER XXXIII

IN THE VESTIBULE OF TRAGEDY

VICTOR ROLLINSON, after bidding the girl good-bye at the elevator, communicated with the local chief of the Federal Secret Service, and spent the remainder of the afternoon in court. Returning to his office at 5 o'clock, he gave his attention to certain perfunctory matters that awaited and then with a sigh of relief yielded up his mind entirely to blissful consideration of Sylvie Aurentsky. His heart leaped at the thought that he was to see her again to-night. For the time being he forgot that grave business which was to bring her to him with her father; but eventually he remembered and called up the Secret Service man again.

"Come over!" said that official, with an excited note in his voice. "I want to show you something."

Victor hung up the receiver and started for the elevator. His way to the branch home of Secret Service would take him directly past the massive front of Buckingham's offices. About the time Victor returned to his office from court, Jerry Archer had come to the offices in response to Mr. Buckingham's request.

Jerry, of course, could have been high-headed. He was a victor. He could have said loftily that the distance was no farther from Mr. Buckingham's office to his than from his to Mr. Buckingham's, which would have been in effect to say if Mr. Buckingham wanted to see him he knew where to find him, but Jerry Archer just wasn't that sort. Mr. Buckingham was an older man than he and a gentleman of "standing" in the community. Though his treatment of Jerry at their last meeting had been cavalier and even harsh, yet

triumph wiped all resentment of that out of the young man's mind. His was a magnanimous nature.

"Well," grumbled Buckingham as Jerry entered, "you seem to have been able to take care of yourself."

"It does look that way to us," chuckled Jerry.

"It was a fair fight and you won," admitted Buckingham grimly.

"We won, but I don't think it was a fair fight," retorted Jerry with level eyes. "Your whole proceeding was cruel, unjust, and probably illegal!"

"As far as that goes," flashed Mr. Buckingham, "your own fight was pretty mussy. Why," and his voice took on an injured tone, "you've actually got me identified in the public eye with this whole system of contractor-bosses in Philadelphia politics—with their nastiness and meanness and corruption. The papers that dare to do so openly align me with the policy of government by murder, as they call it—they charge me with holding a machine in power that gets its majorities with policemen's clubs and the blackjacks and the automatics of professional gunmen. Others veil their insinuations, but make them just the same. I am charged with personifying all these things. It is unjust to me and to my family and I don't like it."

There was a note of reproach and a hint of sadly outraged feelings in Mr. Buckingham's tones at which Jerry was honestly astounded.

"In the first place," he qualified, "let me deny responsibility for anything the newspapers may have said or intimated concerning you. I promised Ruth I would keep your name out of it and personally I have. But, in the second place, let me inquire how it is, Mr. Buckingham, that you can complain of being identified as the chief supporter of political corruption in Philadelphia?"

"Why, there you go!" exclaimed the injured Mr. Buckingham, throwing up his hands as if Jerry himself had admitted guilt. "You might as well charge me with it."

"I do unhesitatingly," responded Jerry, levelling an

accusing finger. "You tried to ruin my father, because you saw me putting the skids under the contractor-boss machine. When you saw it in danger, you set yourself up as its champion. To save it you were willing to do a cowardly, cruel, outrageous thing!" There was a cumulative vocal force in Jerry's arraignment that made his last adjectives ring out like a succession of blows and caused Mr. Buckingham to look more injured than ever.

"But I don't connive at the things they do," he protested. "I don't advise or encourage them. I stand for them merely because they—they are conservative, reasonable men in financial matters."

"But—you stand for them!" Again Jerry's finger was levelled like a bulldog revolver full in Buckingham's face. "That's just it; you stand for them. If you did not they could not stand at all. With your great power, the wealth which you own and the wealth which you control, you could make corruption pretty nearly impossible in this city. That is what makes the people hold you responsible. That is why your name comes first to every lip. You could make yourself a tribune of the people, Mr. Buckingham. You could serve this generation as Robert Morris, as Benjamin Franklin served theirs. You do not. That is why there is so much feeling against you."

Buckingham's large face lost for the time being its assumption of an injured air; the features were only grave and resignedly patient as Jerry went on with: "You never lift a finger to profit any interests but property interests. Your influence fought the housing and sanitation law at Harrisburg; it has fought its enforcement here. You don't think of the human interest, but only of the money interest."

"Jerry," interposed the banker loftily, "my fiduciary responsibilities are vast. The living, the comfort, the happiness of thousands upon thousands of persons is invested in properties under my control—the portion of the widow, the inheritance of orphans,

the lifetime savings of frugal wage-earners—all these are involved. Each man must consider his most sacred duty first."

"Mr. Buckingham," affirmed the young man solemnly, "the human interest of the social mass comes first. You could make this city one of the best governed; you permit it to become one of the worst. When others seek to improve it you fight them. By this you make people distrust you everywhere. You make them distrust wealth as a whole and hate it. You make them want to destroy it. To that extent you are a bad trustee instead of a good one. You blindly jeopardize the very values you set yourself to conserve."

"There you go, making soap-box speeches," protested Mr. Buckingham, resentfully. "You're always apologizing for the thriftless failures, who are ready to join any mob, because they have nothing to lose, however things turn out. Instead of showing people that they are to blame for their own condition, you defend them and delude them. That's demagogism, pure and simple. I tell you, young man, all this agitation is bad for the country. You have men forming unions and they agitate. You have women wanting to vote and they agitate. You have outs that want to get in and they agitate. You create a general restlessness all over the country."

"I create it!" exploded Jerry, exasperated. "No, you create it: you and men like you. It's the wrongs, the injustices, the inadequacies that exist in our social system that cause this agitation. The way to stop it is to set yourself at work removing the wrongs that cause it. What you need, Mr. Buckingham, you and some other blind superman, is for some Abraham Lincoln to stand up and tell you with a tongue of authority that this country cannot continue to exist half-comfortable and half-uncomfortable."

"Socialism!" sneered Mr. Buckingham.

"Your name is a hiss and a byword down there in

the wards where people suffer keenly and begin to think hotly."

"A hiss and a byword?" Mr. Buckingham started up, flushing. "Do you mean it?"

"I mean it," said Jerry solemnly.

For a moment Buckingham sat in silence gripping the desk in front of him. It was easy to see that he considered this a very ungrateful world. "Why, I give more money to charity—" he began and Jerry stopped him short.

"Yes, you give to charity, but what the free workman of America wants is not charity but justice. Can't you—can't you get a thrill from stretching out a great, powerful arm to befriend these strangers in our city who come in such masses and come so hopefully?"

"But you—you can't make people successful," expostulated the banker. "All any man needs is a chance. Why, look at Fels and Guggenheim. They came here like the others only two generations ago, and see what they did. I tell you all any man needs is a chance."

"And I tell you this city has men and women and girls, yes, and boys and children, in block after block that are not getting a chance—not the ghost of a chance. All they need, most of them, is just protection. If they don't get it, a minority will turn into crooks and criminals; the majority will turn into resentful, discouraged, smoldering masses, inflammable patches in the social fabric, where any chance dropping of a match may start a conflagration."

"More soap-box stuff!" snorted Mr. Buckingham. "Now listen to me a moment," and the financier tried to contain himself with a vast and benevolent patience. "You are a young man of a great deal of promise. I've been thinking that possibly our differences were simply that you belonged to a younger generation and I to an older, and that we didn't quite speak the same language. I own that the position in which I have found myself, in the last few days, has not been at all

to my liking. I thought that, perhaps, with some adjustments on each side we could form a sort of an alliance. You have popular gifts, and you could help the people to understand me, and, on the other hand, I could help you to get what you are aiming at. If you are determined in your ambition to be Mayor, why, by heaven, Jerry, I'll make you Mayor!"

Jerry Archer flushed red, and then grew white, as white as his ruddy complexion permitted, and his manner was one of dignified but utter exasperation.

"I have no ambition to be Mayor," he snapped coldly. "Victor Rollinson is going to be Mayor if I have my way."

"That firebrand!"

"He is not a firebrand. He is one of the most coolly determined, sanely balanced men I know."

"But—but you can't reason with him." Mr. Buckingham's glance was restless and excited. It was plain that he regarded Victor Rollinson in the Mayor's chair as even a worse calamity than Jeremiah Archer. Jerry, however, had lost the last shred of his patience. He was for closing the interview at once. He was done with Mr. Buckingham—definitely done with him.

"There is no use of our talking any longer," he announced. "You are hopeless, I have not been able to make you understand. I have respected you and deserved your friendship. You have repaid me with treacherous attacks, which we have beaten off successfully. Now you offer friendship again at the price of a corrupt bargain. Mr. Buckingham, I no longer want your friendship. I resent the terms upon which you offer friendship. You have no money, no influence, nothing that I covet. There was something I meant to ask you for—but I won't. I'll take it."

"And what is that?" demanded Buckingham standing up angrily.

"You'll know in good time," retorted Jerry, growing angrier with every additional second of time for reflection. "I've tried not to quarrel with you, and I

haven't till you've insulted me. Mr. Buckingham, I suppose you will never appreciate the force of what I have been trying to tell you about your social duty unless in some way the consequences of some act of yours should happen to come straight home to you and exact its punishment in humiliation or pain, in such a way that you could clearly trace the connection between its cause and its effect. If it ever does come, I can only say that I hope it falls upon yourself and not upon someone dear to you."

"Very dramatic!" sneered Buckingham. "Very melodramatic. Are you pronouncing a curse on me?"

"Mr. Buckingham," declared Jerry solemnly, "you have pronounced a curse upon yourself. Good day."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE TRAGEDY

WHEN Jerry, in high dudgeon, walked out of Mr. Buckingham's office he almost stepped into Victor upon his way to see the Secret Service man.

"Hello! Hello! What's the gloom?" exclaimed the happy Victor, as he noted Jerry's frowning face. "And what doing here?" he added, looking up and noticing just what office it was from which Jerry was emerging.

"What do you think that blind egotist in there just had the effrontery to propose to me?" demanded Jerry indignantly.

"Not an idea!" confessed Victor, laughing at his friend's seriousness.

Jerry's mood, however, was not to be put out of countenance by levity.

"Strange, isn't it?" he fumed, "how when a man gets a lot of money—an awful lot like Buckingham—he can't put faith in anything else. All this whole show has done to him has been to make him feel that he's bought the wrong thing. He was trying to buy me now—with something he hasn't got to offer."

"Kind of explain yourself," suggested Victor, still so bubblingly happy with the turn in his most intimate personal affairs that he could see no earthly reason for any such glowering solemnity as Jerry was maintaining. "Out with it! What's the story?"

Jerry related briefly the details of the interview. Victor listened interestedly but with his eye roving over Jerry's shoulder and noting all that went on in the street behind him and on that sweep of cement side-

walk that lay between the gutter and the entrance to the offices.

At the curb stood a shiny limousine with chauffeur and footman and with a crest and monogram upon the door. The monogram was W. H. B. It was Buckingham's car and it was waiting to take him home. Next to the car stood a pushcart, with a depleted stock of fruits. Apparently the street merchant had dropped into position here in the hope of picking up a few minutes' trade from the employees streaming out at the close of the working day from the great office building in which the bank was housed.

Listening to Jerry's heated narrative with one lobe of his brain, as it were, Victor reflected with the other on the contrast between the two equipages—the \$6,000 car and the \$6 cart, and casually kept his eye on both.

The fruit vender was restless. He arranged and rearranged his stock, he disposed of customers quickly, and kept darting occasional glances across the pavement toward the offices with its names upon the windows, the name of Buckingham. In one of the intervals between transactions he fumbled in his cart and presently brought out something which he fingered attentively for a moment, then turned and shot another of those keen, scrutinizing glances across the pavement to the entrance to the bank.

This action excited Victor's curiosity and he craned his neck sufficiently to see that what the vender held in his hand was a knife, a short, thick butcher knife, obviously the one with which he severed bananas from the stalk. But he was toying with its edge in a most peculiar and suggestive fashion, while an expression of mingled cunning and malignance appeared upon his face. This demanded a more concentrated attention than Victor had been able to give up to now.

"Hold on a minute. Let's watch this fellow," said Victor, nudging Jerry and nodding in the direction of the fruit vender.

Jerry turned and followed the direction of Victor's eye.

"Why!" he exclaimed in surprise. "That's Aurentsky!"

"Aurentskyl My God!"

A whole chain of associations started up in the lawyer's mind and raced back to the story Sylvy had told him a few hours ago. Instinctively Victor turned toward the entrance to the offices, and there was Buckingham in a palm beach suit and a straw hat, with cane in hand, descending the steps to the street. After that the scene reeled itself off like a moving picture. Jerry, already advancing to speak to Aurentsky, saw the man's face light with sudden fury and he leaped forward, brandishing his knife at Buckingham.

Both Jerry and Victor dashed to intervene, the former in the lead by favour of that one advanced step he had already taken. For a few moments thereafter everything was confusion. The four men reeled about the centre of the pavement as if in some kind of wild dervish dance, the knife flashing, Mr. Buckingham's cane waving, his voice grunting resentment and expostulation. Then abruptly the figures fell apart, except that the powerful Rollinson stood gripping Aurentsky by the neck and his knife hand, holding the excited Jew almost clear of the ground and shaking him into complete subjection.

Buckingham staggered backward, panting, staring, and still barking breathless expostulations at the man who had attacked him. Jerry stood a moment, gazing at Aurentsky with an expression of horror in his eyes, and then, ignoring everybody else, took two strides to the granite steps and sat down upon them. His head was bowed and one hand held his side.

"He is stabbed," shouted Mr. Buckingham frantically. "A doctor! Will nobody call a doctor? Quick! It's young Archer. He saved my life."

Jerry, meanwhile, was much cooler. Methodically he struggled with a refractory button on his light

blue serge coat, finally conquered it, and threw back the garment, revealing an enlarging crimson stain on his white silk shirt with a puncture in the centre through which blood was welling. He contemplated this for a moment and then with a sigh toppled over, but a teller from the bank caught his head before it struck the granite, and immediately a half dozen pairs of hands were lifting and bearing him inside.

Mr. Buckingham, calmed by the sight of something being done, turned upon Victor who still clung to the now cowering Aurentsky.

"It was the work of a madman," said Buckingham.

"It was the work of a man made mad," corrected Rollinson, who had been trying to extract some meaning from the prisoner's incoherent raving and had perhaps succeeded.

"That is the sort of cattle we are breeding in this country now!" exclaimed the excited and indignant banker.

"It is the sort of people we are making or permitting to be made out of immigrants who come here with the best intentions in the world," retorted Victor straight; but Buckingham, outraged at such contumacy, came back hotly with:

"It is the way they repay the hospitality with which we welcome these men to American institutions."

Two policemen came rushing up and Victor, ignoring Buckingham for the time being, gave the prisoner into their hands. "This man stabbed Jerry Archer," he said tersely. "Have him held without bail. Mr. Buckingham will be around to swear to the complaint." Then he turned on the great manufacturer and this time with a cold glare in his eye, before which that nerve-shattered gentleman actually quailed, quailing not being a thing to which he was accustomed.

"Buckingham," said Victor sternly, "this man will be tried, either for assault with intent to kill or—" the lawyer paused and looked significantly within—"for murder. In either event I shall defend him."

"You!" expostulated Buckingham, "the bosom friend of the man he stabbed."

"I shall defend him," iterated Victor, still with the glare, "and I shall show at the trial what kind of American institutions we have welcomed him to."

The two men were already hurrying toward the private offices of Buckingham; yet the latter paused long enough to snap back over his shoulder:

"Rollinson! You are the most dangerous man in Philadelphia."

"No," rejoined Rollinson coolly. "You are!"

When, a minute later, two doctors appeared on the scene they found both Rollinson and Buckingham bending over the couch in the inner office, on which the limp figure of Jerry Archer was stretched. Quickly the men of medicine and surgery went about their task, one working with restoratives, the other concerning himself with the wound, while a breathless crowd of clerks, which filled the outer office, peered in through the door, looked at each other blankly, and began to relate in low tones how they heard or saw or first had their attention directed to the fact that something unusual was happening on the outside.

"Where is he?" A woman's voice, not crying, not shrieking, not raised unduly, but with surely the most pathetic note in inquiry in it that ever freighted human tones, came floating past the ears of all. It was the voice of Ruth.

Kept in town during these hot days of summer by her war work, she had spent the whole steaming day at Red Cross headquarters, and then, having sent her own car off to League Island on a patriotic errand of some sort, was walking to the Buckingham offices, expecting to ride home with her father. The sight of the crowd and the sound of the clanging patrol wagon had alarmed her, and some hasty word of inquiry had brought her the story. Bursting through the cordon of police that already surrounded the counting room, she made her way to her father's private offices and stood for a mo-

ment frozen to the threshold, her white, startled face turned this way and that, as if bewildered and not recognizing surroundings that were very familiar to her.

"Father," she exclaimed. "Where is he?"

"There," said Mr. Buckingham, startled at the apparition-like appearance of his daughter. "The doctors are with him. You must not go in," he adjured in kindly tones, at the same time reaching out a sustaining hand to the trembling figure.

"Not go in? Why, father!" The girl's expression was compounded of surprise and reproach and after growing taller and steadier for a moment, she passed her father as if he had been a piece of statuary, but, with her hand upon the door-frame in front of her, halted and lifted up her face with lips moving as if praying for strength to face what she might find within.

When she entered her father followed close. Rollinson was there already, for he had never moved from his friend's side, except to make room for the doctors. Ruth dropped down at Jerry's head without a word, but he seemed instantly to feel her presence. The pale face lighted with a smile and the blue eyes opened.

"Jerry!" she exclaimed. "Are you alive?"

"Seem to be," he answered feebly, unable, even in a crisis like this, to suppress his inclination to humour.

"You must be! You must live, Jerry. For me! For Philadelphia!"

Jerry pressed the soft hand which had found his instinctively and promptly faded out of consciousness.

For a moment Ruth trembled and reeled upon her knees, then let her eyes wander to where the physicians were at work, and shuddered at the sight of so much blood.

"Is there—hope?" she asked faintly.

"There is—hope!" exclaimed the older of the two men.

"Then you must save my husband for me!"

"Your husband!" expostulated William Buckingham in an outraged whisper as he reached to lift his daughter from her knees.

"My promised husband!" corrected Ruth, but somewhat witheringly that in such a moment any one should be material enough to make distinction between the prospective and the accomplished. Releasing her father's hand, Ruth was down on her knees again, stroking back the tousled auburn hair from Jerry's brow and caressing his eyes with her lips. But when presently one of the physicians touched her on the arm she rose obediently.

"We will do all that can be done," he said kindly. "We shall need his concentrated attention to help us."

"Live, Jerry, live!" she whispered passionately into his ear.

Though consciousness had apparently not yet returned, it did seem as if he heard her and nodded. Standing a moment looking down at the beloved face, Ruth felt a sudden rain of tears upon her cheeks and turned away quickly, careful to suppress every sound of her emotion that might disturb or distress the apparently dying man, and allowing her father to lead her with trembling knees into the outer office, which had now been cleared of its throng of curious.

"How did it happen?" she asked as soon as she could speak.

"He took a blow that was meant for me," explained her father, pale and emotional in his utterance.

"And who struck it?" demanded Ruth.

"I haven't an idea," confessed Buckingham.

"Aurensky!" said Victor tersely.

"Aurensky?—Jacob Aurensky?—Poor Sylvyl Poor, poor little Sylvyl!" and Ruth had another fit of crying.

When able to speak again she turned upon her father with tones of the gentlest yet the most penetrating reproach, and said:

"And you, father, you and men like you made Aurentsky what he was."

"I?"

Buckingham's expression was not easily described. This came as the most unkindest cut of all. Jerry Archer, half an hour before, had been making intimations like this to him. Then Rollinson had done the same, after the madman's act; but that now his own daughter should do it surprised him hardly more than if she had taken up the paper knife from the desk and tried also to stab him.

"You and men like you," reiterated the girl, to the interrogation in her father's tone and glance, "who have used your great political power to fasten upon the city a system of government so corrupt that it makes haters of all government out of victims like Aurentsky."

"Ruth!" Buckingham's voice was full of sharp rebuke now.

"Oh, I know," exclaimed the girl, "it sounds unfilial, but I know also that it is true. Yet I have been slow to speak. For a long time I tried to be neutral, listening while Jerry poured facts into one ear and you poured prejudices into the other. How I have held that dear fellow at arm's length for months and months—for more than a year, unable to reach a decision because he would never say one word against you to me, and I was waiting for events to convince me! They have done that completely."

Mr. Buckingham, shocked, distressed, embarrassed, felt that he would have been in a less difficult position had the knife of Aurentsky found its intended target in his own breast. Burning with a sense of the injustice of these direct accusations and desiring hotly to defend himself against the whole absurdity, yet he knew perfectly well that while the man who had saved his life clung to existence by a thread it was no fitting time for argument. He struggled to regain his poise and by a masterful effort succeeded.

"Ruth! my child," he urged soothingly. "You

have had a terrible shock. Don't let us try to talk of it any more now. You're saying things that are not very—not very sensible; things that you'll be sorry for to-morrow. Won't you let Mr. Rollinson take you home? I'll follow, when the doctors are through, with the latest word about—Jerry."

"Home? Father!" The blue eyes were filled again with reproach at such crass failure to comprehend. "I shall never leave Jerry till I know he's out of danger. I'll ride in the ambulance to the hospital; I'll stay with him night and day, till the crisis is past."

Buckingham loved his daughter deeply. He would not cross her now in this moment of her young heart's greatest strain. What was inevitable was inevitable.

"Very well, my girl," he assented, and his voice was very tender. "Do as you like. Your mother, of course, will come to you at once. Your anxiety can hardly be greater than my own, for Jerry took a blow that was meant for me. Let us hope that his vigorous young constitution may bring him through where mine would have failed me."

These soft, sincerely spoken words sufficed to restore quite natural relations between the two.

"Oh, father!" sobbed the girl, falling on his shoulder, and still sobbing went on with:

"It was so, so like Jerry. And he didn't do that for—for me. Not to save my father! He would have done it for anybody—to save Aurentsky—if it had been you trying to kill Aurentsky."

Mr. Buckingham shuddered. The mere thought that he, with a weapon—with a hideous knife for instance, like that which had been brandished before his eyes—could attempt to kill anybody, was most distressing.

"Why, you are wounded!" said Ruth to Rollinson when she had dried her tears sufficiently to notice for the first time the slashed condition of his coat.

"No, only my coat, fortunately," explained the lawyer. "The skin is barely scratched. I was holding

his knife arm with my hand and working my grip up toward his wrist when he made those cuts. Momentarily the fellow was as strong as Sandow, but the instant he was subdued, he collapsed weakly, and there was no fight in him when I passed him over to the police."

"If Jerry—if Jerry di—dies, I do not want Auren' ky prosecuted," gulped Ruth, struggling with a raw emotion.

The physicians opened the door behind her in time to hear this remark. "Although such wounds are usually fatal," one announced, "Mr. Archer has rallied amazingly. Youth, I think, will tell."

There was a gurgle of something very like emotion in the physician's tones, as indicating that the medical man was taking up the battle in Jerry's behalf with more than a professional interest in his case.

"Oh, thank you for that blessed assurance!" gasped Ruth with great feeling.

"May I go to him again?"

"You may, but do not speak."

The girl tiptoed in softly and sat by Jerry's head, her hand again upon his brow and occasionally she lowered her soft cheek to his and with her own eyes closed as if in prayer.

Presently the physician reëntered accompanied by men with a stretcher, and Ruth stood by, frightened afresh as she noted the extreme anxiety with which the surgeons superintended the transfer of the wounded body from the couch to the stretcher, and again how they hovered over the slow progress outward of the bearers to guard against the slightest shock or jar. Ruth followed with apprehension in her eyes and heart in mouth, realizing that, despite the words of hope which had been spoken, the life of her lover turned upon a hair. Without a word she stepped into the ambulance, the interne not protesting.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE SEARCH FOR THE MOTIVE

WHEN Victor Rollinson saw the ambulance roll away, bearing the wounded body of his friend, he stood upon the curb a moment, irresolute, then stepped into the bank and telephoned to the Secret Service man. Emerging once more he took a taxicab, urged all speed, and was at the hospital when the ambulance arrived. Ruth pressed his hand for a moment as the stretcher was lifted out.

"Still alive!" she whispered in a voice broken with emotion. Thereafter she waited with Victor ten anxious minutes in the reception hall, till a nurse came down to say that she might go to Jerry now.

"Stronger, but complains of pain," was the word the doctor brought down to Victor.

"Stronger! Stronger!" repeated Victor hopefully, and, holding the thought, reentered his taxicab and drove to where the Secret Service man was waiting for him more or less patiently, probably less. As the lawyer stepped out of his taxicab, the newsboys were crying the extras: "All about the murder of Buckingham" they were shouting, a cry that echoed into the private office where Buckingham sat, still nervous and disturbed, unwilling to separate himself from the hospital wire long enough to go home.

"Why do they call it that?" he fretted. "I am not murdered!"

Meantime Victor Rollinson was buying a paper very eagerly, for he was still uncertain whether the attack upon Buckingham was the sporadic outbreak of an

insane man, or but one detail of that general plot to kill and destroy of which Aurentsky had once babbled to his daughter. For all Rollinson knew now, Jerry might be but one of a score of victims of some vast programme of riot and murder. A glance beyond the headlines assured him that so far the papers knew of no attack upon life, save that of Aurentsky upon Buckingham, and with fears somewhat relieved, Victor hurried to the elevator.

The Secret Service man sat with extracts from his files around him. There were newspaper clippings, there were hand-bills, and posters, there were typewritten reports of operatives, and there were pictures of many men, singly and in groups; but there was no picture of Levene.

"Small fish!" remarked the Secret Service man sententiously; then added: "But big connections."

"So I see," said Rollinson, looking over the records.

"Anything on foot here?"

"Signs of it."

"Then you'd better get busy."

"We are. In twenty-four hours I'll have a member of their international committee here. He'll be on the inside, plotting with the bunch of them before midnight, and in the morning's mail will be a letter telling me everything."

"I shall want to see that letter," said Victor.

"You can't," responded the Secret Service man, tersely, "but you can ask me any questions about its contents that you want to, and I'll answer them as far as my duty permits."

"I shall ask you if the name of Aurentsky, who stabbed Jerry Archer, is in that report."

"And I will tell you whether it is or not," said the Secret Service man. "Meantime, anything you pick up—"

"I am going to defend Aurentsky."

"Well, what do you know about that!" exclaimed the Secret Service agent in surprise. "A man never knows

where to find you lawyers, does he? I'm going down to sweat Aurentsky now."

"And is there no power I can employ to keep you from doing that?" inquired the lawyer quickly, purposely ignoring the agent's gratuitous observation.

"There is none," said the Federal official.

"I have just one request to make of you then, Simmons. Make sure that you get the whole truth."

"I wish I knew how to make sure of that," retorted Simmons dryly.

"Perhaps that is where I can help you and thereby not hurt but actually advance the interests of my client."

"Perhaps," reflected the Secret Service man, with a sudden straight look at Rollinson, as if he had caught a hitherto unsuspected meaning in his words and manner.

Victor went out thinking of Sylvy! Sylvy! Poor little Sylvy! This blow would fall harder on her than on any one else but Ruth; and Sylvy was to have brought her father to him to-night.

The lawyer made a pretense of eating a cold bite at the Bellevue and went to his office to wait. The hour was now 8 o'clock. He had no doubt that the girl in her distress would come to him but bringing her mother instead of her father. He was right so far, but in addition to the mother came the rest of the Aurentsky family. Rose, sixteen, Lily, fourteen, and Sarah, eight—all clinging about the ashen-featured, heavy-footed woman, their white, frightened faces reflecting dumb appreciation of the woe that had fallen on them, and their great dark eyes fixed upon Rollinson as the only human being in whom their souls could find a hope.

But while the mother and children halted at the door, apparently too awed or too frightened to heed Rollinson's invitation to enter and be seated, Sylvy came impulsively to the very centre of the room.

"Victor, oh, Victor!" she breathed, and then halted

with wringing hands, a forlorn, pathetic figure. She was hatless, her eyes were shiny with unwiped tears, and a wisp of hair had fallen down across her forehead and was plastered to the round of a cheek by the salt wetness it found there. In the struggle for self-control her lips were tightened till their redness had almost disappeared. Obviously, her grief-torn heart was yearning for him, and yet she not only held herself back from him, but by the exercise of some subtle force held him back from her.

Victor had pictured her as flying with sobs to him for help. Instead she came like one who merely asked him to recognize that she had been struck and wounded and that she suffered. Into that fresh young face there seemed to have come suddenly all of that vast capacity for suffering which her race has displayed through the long years of history.

In this moment Victor saw the girl lifted far above him, and through his mind there flitted some faint perception of the fact that between him and her were certain fundamental differences of reaction toward the experiences of life—reactions the determinations of which lay outside of themselves and were not controllable by themselves but, reaching back into the roots of the past, held the two by iron grip to courses that must lie forever separate.

This was his Sylvy; her grief was his grief. He meant to take her in his arms and console her. But instead she stood apart and held him off by that subtle, indefinable negation of her own personality. She made it clear that though she loved him she was not his Sylvy; that this burden of grief was hers not his. But she had also made it clear that she came to him knowing he would make her suffering lighter if he could. "Jerry! Mr. Archer! will he die?" the girl gasped when it seemed that she could trust her voice to speech.

"Let us hope not," Victor answered encouragingly, and then sought to shift her mind from contemplation

of the worst possibility by asking gently, "Have you seen your father?"

Sylvy nodded.

"Ve been by de jail," said a woe-filled voice from the door.

"They let mother and me in for a few minutes," explained Sylvy

"Wha—what has happened?" inquired Victor eagerly. "Was it the plot?"

"No, it was the doctor who came to see little Isadore," Sylvy explained in a breathless voice that tried to be very calm and steady. "He met papa on the street to-day and wanted him to move. He told him what had killed little Isadore and that it would kill us all."

"But I don't see——" interrupted Victor perhaps a trifle impatiently

"Dot Buckingham—dot Buckingham. He kilt my Izzie," broke in the woman from her position near the door; her voice saturated with an anguish such as only a wife and mother can know.

"Buckingham!" Victor's exclamation was almost reproof.

"Buckingham!" echoed Sylvy determinedly.

For a moment Rollinson looked perplexedly from one to the other of the two women.

"Herel Herel" he commanded. "Sit down! Every last one of you sit down." He indicated chairs for the children and made Sylvy and her mother sit near him.

"Now," he said, "between you try to tell me exactly what—what it was the doctor told your father and how it affected him."

With Mrs. Aurentsky leading and speaking rapidly, and Sylvy interjecting interpretation and explanations, the story was extracted and pieced together in orderly fashion. By its substance the lawyer was obviously much moved, but at its conclusion he sat for a time plunged in silence.

"Strange, strange coincidence," he murmured, and

then, turning to the wife, he said feelingly: "Mrs. Aurentsky, I think God will acquit your husband of murder, but I have my doubts about a jury."

"But—but can nothing save him?" interposed Sylvy, her voice tremulous and appealing. "Father is just a poor helpless victim of something he doesn't understand."

"I solemnly believe him to be," declared the lawyer, "but—listen."

The window was open. The cries of newsboys rose from the street.

"Do you hear all that pother? The people will demand a sacrifice. And yet," Rollinson rose to his feet and declared impressively, "Before God, I will do all in my power to prevent this city from committing another crime upon the person of Jacob Aurentsky."

Sylvy not could have marked the heroic figure Rollinson made, or the determination in his voice, without being freshly moved to tremendous faith in his ability to do what he undertook to do.

"Oh, I knew you would save him—if you could!" she burst out impulsively, seizing the uplifted hand of Victor in both of hers and clinging to it like a drowning person to a rope's end.

"Oh, you darling!" breathed Victor, forgetting his audience and seeking to gather her to him; but she eluded his purpose dexterously and stood holding his hand in one of hers while the other was extended to draw her mother nearer.

"Mother! Mother!" she assured, "Mr. Rollinson will save father; he will save him!"

"I do not promise that. I said I would try," qualified Victor.

Mrs. Aurentsky's feeling of awe and faith in the lawyer battled for a moment with doubt and displeasure, for she had divined the intent of his demonstration toward Sylvy; but the anxious and unhappy woman surrendered to emotions of gratitude and hope.

"Yes, yes," she quavered. "Gott pless you? Gott pless you. You vill safe my husband—you vill safe him!" But after a moment the woman stood off and viewed him doubtfully again.

"You luff Sylvy," she announced, almost accusingly.

"You have told her?" Victor inquired of Sylvy.

The girl nodded.

"Yes," answered Victor frankly. "I want to marry her."

The woman's answer was a mournful shake of the head. "Ach!" she gutturalled sadly, though with a look of pity almost in the troubled eyes she lifted to the large face of Rollinson. She did not scruple even to tell him that such a union could not be, that it was hopeless; but such a manner was more eloquent than words could have been, and there was borne in upon Victor like a chill the perception that not a woman but a race, a history, and one of the world's great religions were all shaking their heads at his proposal.

Yet when he turned and saw Sylvy standing all by herself and so near to him, with such gratitude and trust in her face, he could hardly refrain from reaching out and seizing her, and crying: "You are mine, Sylvy, you are mine! In the face of everything you are mine."

He did refrain, however, for the habit of self-control was strong in him, and Sylvy gave him an impulsive and affectionate little handclasp at the door which was compensation for much.

Victor went back to the desk to find his telephone ringing, and ten minutes later was receiving the first of a series of calls from reporters that continued steadily at intervals for an hour and a half.

CHAPTER XXXVI

BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

WHEN the last of the newspaper men had gone, Victor telephoned the hospital but got an ominous report from the bedside. The life of Jeremiah Thomas Archer was hovering on the brink. The night was to be a vigil with doctors and nurses guarding the flickering life-spark against the coming of the great black raider. One of the surgeons installed at the bedside by the Archer family was an old classmate of Victor's. The lawyer got this man on the wire and exacted from him a promise to keep him advised of every slightest change in the wounded man's condition. This meant that for Victor, too, the night was to be a vigil, and its scene his office—where he had kept vigils before—the place where he had tramped to and fro with his love for Sylvy, hoping, planning, waiting.

To-day Sylvy had been there and had confessed her love, to-night she had come again in the supreme crisis of her life; and he, of course, had joyously assured that he would help. Yet to-night, somehow, the sight of that old-country mother, of those children clinging to her skirts, and of Sylvy, so obviously a part of their peculiar life, had actually forced him to pause and realize that his heart might be dashing itself against that which could not be broken without destroying the happiness of the thing it loved. It was in the mood of disenchantment induced by this perception that Victor composed himself to watch at the bedside of his friend by means of a telephone wire.

He was subdued but not despondent, though anxieties tortured him—anxieties for Sylvy and anxieties for

Jerry, as well as considerations for Aurentsky and considerations, too, for the future of that important political enterprise the success of which at this time appeared to depend so entirely upon the life of its organizer and recognized leader. All these topics of thought struggled for a front place in the lawyer's mind. They made consecutive thinking impossible. He tried to shake off the spell by reading and could not. He got out his papers in the case of McDonald vs. Yardley on appeal, and tried to work, but that was equally impossible. He fingered the telephone with the idea of calling up the hospital again but decided that would be childish. At length, sometime after midnight, came a ring and the voice of the doctor.

"Weaker!" was the laconic message in the tone of a busy professional man who stopped in the midst of urgent duties to discharge a personal obligation.

"Oh, my God!" Victor groaned and clutched the edges of the desk violently with his hands.

In an hour the phone rang again.

"Sinking!" said the voice. Victor groaned again and clasped his hands above his head in agony. The night was barely cooler than the day, and yet a chill struck in upon him in the midst of his loneliness, for he was realizing how alone he had been in life, and how much a friend Jerry Archer had been to him. He had been carried past all thoughts of public duties, of political movements, of all but the fact that he was a lonely man and Jerry Archer had been his friend. Lonely? Yes; for there was some native aloofness in the soul of Rollinson. Other friends were doubtless even now besieging the hospital, grouping with anxiety and tears in the reception room, but he, Victor Rollinson, sat here apart, watching his friend die through the eye of a telephone wire.

After fifteen minutes he could wait no longer, but rang up the physican.

"Archer? No change?" came back the answer presently.

No change! Then the sinking had stopped. Victor tortured himself with wondering if this was true or just the stereotyped answer they were giving out to all inquiries.

Then, after what seemed an age, came the colourless voice of the doctor again:

"Very weak, but pulse steadying."

"Thank God!" gulped Victor. "There is hope."

But the voice on the other end did not say there was. "Buck up, Rollinson!" it suggested reprovingly. These words carried with them a breath of the valiant spirit with which those skilled watchers yonder by the bedside were waging their fight against death.

Buck up? Of course he must buck up. Victor was rather surprised at his own weakness and tried to get his usual stout grip upon himself. This effort was aided by the messages that came at intervals now of every half hour or so.

"Holding his own!" "Rallying!" "Stronger!" "Resting easily!" then "Stronger!" came again.

"Then he will live?" exulted Rollinson.

"It's a question of infection now," explained the medical man. "That was the knife Aurentsky cut bananas off the stalk with—gummy, naturally, with every sort of flying germ adhering to it."

This was unsettling again, and Victor hung up the phone with his heart still torn by fears. When, after an interval of brooding, he lifted up his head, dawn was stealing in ghostly fashion through the deep canyons of the streets. Meditative, he watched the growing of the light, as detail by detail of the city's daytime aspect was revealed and fitted into the view his skyscraper office window afforded.

Presently the picture was complete. The whole city was alight, but there was one spot in Victor's mind that had been bright when the sun went down, which now refused to lighten. It was the spot in which his love for Sylvy had glowed for more than a year with shekinah-like radiance. That, he reflected, was psy-

chologically natural. The moment her love for him had been admitted, that other thing, the race barrier—before ignored as something negligible—had now suddenly loomed black and unsurmountable. But there was no comfort in mere psychological analysis.

Taking firm hold upon himself, and shaking the heaviness from his eyes, though he could not shake it out of his heart, Victor went to his nearest club, seeking the refreshment of a bath and strong coffee before facing the responsibilities of the day, which he foresaw would be many.

As he passed along, the morning papers were being cried in the streets. Victor did not purchase one, and refused himself even a glance at the headlines. He knew all that they had to tell him, and for the time being was not concerned with them. Waking Philadelphia, however, with an inkling of what was to be expected from the extras of the night before, was slipping out into hallways and on to doorsteps and snatching up its newspapers and devouring them eagerly. Never had those newspapers displayed a more exciting budget.

Facts bristled—the fact that an itinerant street peddler had made attempt to murder one of the most prominent men in the city; the fact that this man's life had been saved by young Jerry Archer, who, but a few days before the rescued one had been trying to destroy financially, the fact that the gallant young man was probably fatally wounded; the fact that, on the top of so recent a quarrel, he should have been at the office of Buckingham at all; the fact that Miss Ruth Buckingham had rushed to the side of the wounded man, had ridden in the ambulance to the hospital and had kept a nightly vigil while the surgeons fought for life; the fact that Jeremiah T. Archer was the recognized leader of a new political movement which threatened all at once to throw the old régime into the discard—each of these facts constituted a news feature and they all combined to excite the wildest interest. They piled sensation upon sensation.

The reporters had winnowed and assembled the details with keen appreciation of their importance. The re-write men had exhausted their vocabularies on leads and descriptions that left no dramatic possibility untouched, and make-up editors had cheerfully crowded the war into the background and spread all over the front pages the most absorbing story about itself Philadelphia had ever read.

But greater zest, even, than that induced by the current news interest in the facts related, sprang from a suspicion of other facts that might lay beneath the surface. Readers felt instinctively that the story printed did not tell all the story. Editors and reporters had been equally convinced of that. This lent colour to speculation, and gave importance to attempts to interpret the meaning of the tragedy. This was made difficult by the coincidence that two of the chief actors could not be interviewed. The lips of Jerry Archer, it was explained, might be sealed forever before the presses had stopped running. Jacob Aurenstsky was held incommunicado, and being sweated under orders from the Federal Secret Service, which, for some reason not understood, had taken an immediate interest in the prisoner.

Mr. Buckingham, of course, could be interviewed, but he expressed himself with reserve. He, it should be made clear, continued to feel himself an injured party. He was injured that a man should have attempted to stab him at all; he was injured that the man who saved his life happened to be his most dangerous political enemy; injured that his daughter Ruth should be disclosed as in love with the young hero; and injured that all this pother of publicity was inevitable. Mr. Buckingham liked the spotlight when it fell on him in Jovian pose. He disliked it utterly when it caught him with his halo tilted or otherwise at a disadvantage; and from this point of view the disadvantage in the present situation was pronounced. Except that he was not dead, and that Jerry Archer's

stout young heart still battled for his life. Mr. Buckingham could extract no comfort from the thing at all.

The interview he gave was, therefore, circumscribed, confined, indeed, to a stickful, though writing men skillfully extended it. He declined to talk about anything but the assault. That he described and gave all praise to Jerry Archer and Victor Rollinson for saving his life. He confessed himself greatly moved by the sacrificial act of the young manufacturer in taking the blows which had been meant for him. Motive for the crime, Mr. Buckingham was unable to ascribe—unless he had been selected for a target merely because he had been fairly successful in life, and the modern fashion was to decry success, while everywhere agitators made the less thrifty classes envious and dissatisfied.

Mr. Buckingham expressed hope that the punishment the courts would undoubtedly mete out to his assailant would be a warning to others of his kind, and that the assault itself might exercise some deterrent influence upon those persons in high places in the community who so recklessly stirred up passions in the breasts of the common people which the inciters were thereafter unable to control.

If Jerry Archer had been able to sit up and read Mr. Buckingham's interview, he would have done so with an ironic smile, and have pronounced it a gem. It reflected Mr. Buckingham so perfectly.

But there was another interview which furnished material for much of what was published that morning. It came from Victor Rollinson, and by no means all of it appeared in quotation marks. The lawyer was too skillful a strategist for this—and in the midst of all his other concerns, he had taken time to think of strategy. That which had happened was, despite its elements of personal tragedy, but an incident in a political contest, and Victor's care was to see that the events were not to be interpreted to the disadvantage of the sacred cause of better government in

Philadelphia, as represented by the Real Republican organization.

But along with this subtle kind of campaign publicity were printed bold, unequivocal answers of Rollinson to certain of the reporters' questions; answers that constituted a ringing personal challenge of the man himself to Buckingham, and made it plain to all that over the wounded body of his friend the lawyer took up the fight where Jerry had laid it down, as, for instance:

"Why did Jerry Archer come to the office of Buckingham?" ran the question of a reporter. "He had been summoned there," replied Victor Rollinson, flatly, "in one last effort to coerce him into ceasing his political activities. Perceiving that he had failed in this, Mr. Buckingham had made a cool proposal for a political alliance, which Archer had indignantly rejected. A quarrel resulted. Once more the two men defied each other. Jerry accused Mr. Buckingham of being a bad citizen, a bad influence in the community, and left him in anger."

The lawyer explained that he knew these facts because he had encountered Jerry in front of the offices and was listening to his story of the interview when the assault had interrupted it.

This statement not only put Buckingham in a bad light, but it lent the touch of a fine magnanimity to Jerry's act of heroism.

This narrative, too, of Jerry's last political and personal differences with Buckingham, made the advent of Ruth into the scene of the tragedy the more heroic, just as the love story tinged the whole affair with a rose-glamour of romance that redeemed the situation from much of its sordidness.

In consequence of all these things, Philadelphia had read with unusual avidity, and demanded more. To meet this demand for more, afternoon editions of the papers were being offered while yet the late commuters were stepping from their trains.

And no one read more eagerly or with more sinking

of the heart than those hundreds of small ward and division leaders of the Real Republican organization. Some of these humble men of large faith had run great risks in openly fighting the old political organizations. They had ventured upon this campaign at personal sacrifice, and had not gone forward without misgivings. Their security lay in victory.

They must win. Their one sure hope of winning was Jerry, and the papers frankly despaired of Jerry's life; wherefor, these division workers were despondent and angry.

"If Archer dies we'll hang that Jew to a trolley pole if we have to blow up the City Hall to do it," declared one desperate division leader to another.

"Shut up!" said the other. "You talk like one of the old gang. We're law abidin', ain't we?"

"Supposed to be," subsided the other rather regretfully.

On this day of days the executive committee of the Real Republican organization was also in session. The session was almost a prayer-meeting. It came near to being pathetic to see how helpless these strong men felt with the optimistic spirit of Jerry Archer suddenly extracted from their councils. But stoutly they tried to reason with the worst. If Jerry lived nothing could prevent his nomination and election; and if he died—well, if he died, the circumstances of his death defined the issues as nothing else could have done, and there was Victor Rollinson, a different type from Jerry, not as warm-hearted, not as winning in his way, but a cold, wrathful fighter, who dealt sledgehammer blows, and who, with Jerry's organization behind him, made a champion to be followed to the death.

"He was Archer's candidate," they said, talking mournfully, one to another and trying to reconcile themselves to speaking of Jerry as of the past.

"But Archer was the organization's candidate," others interjected. "The fellows down the line swear

by him. They wouldn't fight half as hard for anybody else. Take a poll to-day and you'll get just thirteen hundred votes for Archer, and about ten for 'scatterings.'"

"But we can't nominate a dying man."

"They would. Let 'em vote, and they would."

The executive committee adjourned without taking any action, but there could not be many such futile meetings and adjournments. The eve of the campaign was at hand. Within a week the machine list of candidates for the primary would be announced, and their election-drive launched with a rush, for the old organization, despite the vigorous skelting it had endured, was still intact and clinging tenaciously to its positions.

On this day it was brutally elated. A party organization which has employed policemen to beat and bruise and imported gunmen to terrorize and murder could hardly be expected to turn from its path. But, notwithstanding the urgent necessity of action, or of preparedness for action, the executive committee of the Real Republicans continued to mark time while its eyes like all others in Philadelphia watched intently the fight for life going on in a local hospital.

Jerry's first day was like the night, a time of hoverings, of alternate sinking and rally, with the faces of the watchers growing graver and graver as temperatures rose, pulse became erratic, or fresh effects of shock began to manifest themselves. As the hour of the second night advanced hope declined, and the morning papers went to press with the headline: "ARCHER DYING!"

But youth is a wonderful thing. Its resources are beyond estimate, and the vitality that comes of clean living fought in the young man's favour. Early afternoon editions announced Archer still alive, and the papers next morning carried a message of definite hope. "He will live," announced the surgeons unhesitatingly, "if infection does not set in. We must

wait a week or ten days to be sure of that, but with the chances increasingly in his favour for every day that passes."

From this time forward, however, the bulletins were more and more encouraging.

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CHAPTER XXXVII

THE CAMPAIGN BEGINS

ONE week from the day that Jerry Archer was stabbed, the contractor machine, which styled itself the Republican City Committee, announced its list of candidates for the primary election. The man proposed for Mayor was Thomas V. Farrell, a respectable broker, prosperous, capable of making a good speech, a ready "mixer," but a man without personal or executive force. As to character, little could be said against him, and little urged in his behalf. He was a good man, but would not make a good Mayor. He was an excellent figurehead and nothing more.

The public sensed the type quickly, and they understood the manoeuvre. Mr. Farrell was recognized as a piece of political camouflage, and the proposal of his name acted like an irritant on the community mind. The result was a quickening of interest in the Real Republican organization, and a strange popular turning to Jeremiah Archer as the candidate to be opposed to Farrell. This was remarkable, for up to now there had been no public talk of Jerry as a candidate for Mayor. He was admittedly a young, clean, hard fighter, with a flare for publicity and a genius for taking hold of something hot and then holding it; but when Philadelphia conjured up in its mind an ideal for Mayor it pictured some man of years and dignities, not a stripling.

As a matter of fact, it was Buckingham himself who had started this talk. He had proposed to make Jerry Mayor in return for an offensive and defensive alliance; that had angered Jerry and led to the final

rupture. Victor Rollinson had told this to the reporters; they had told it to the people. Now as days passed and more and more encouraging bulletins came from the bedside of the wounded man, more and more people began to think of Jerry as an admirable candidate for Mayor. They talked of new timber, they talked of blazing a new path, and of the time being at hand for making a radical departure.

At the same time, the business interests of the city were reassured by the fact that the protective tariff found an immediate place in his programme. This, they felt, stamped young Archer as a man of sanity and common sense, and no allegations of radicalism could outweigh it. Furthermore, the trend of events had made Jerry the popular hero the city over, and the best advertised man in it. It was recognized that the name of Archer at the head of any ticket would command a popular following such as no man since Blankenburg could have enjoyed.

But while this was everywhere the talk, it was nevertheless only talk. Victor Rollinson, however, skillfully and deliberately preparing to take advantage of his friend's temporary incapacity, translated the talk into action.

To the executive committee he unfolded his plan for a bold stroke, which was nothing less than a proposal to hold a convention of their infant organization. Such a thing was contrary to precedent. The old organization did things in star chamber; a few men made up a slate and coolly pushed it out to the committee to be ratified.

"Let the party speak," proposed Victor. "The party consists at the present time simply of its working organization. Let it meet and adopt a platform. Let it name candidates—above all, let the convention itself nominate the candidate for Mayor."

The executive committee fell in heartily with the idea, particularly because it thought it knew whom the convention would nominate. Quick action was

necessary. The call went out on Monday. The convention was held on Wednesday night in the Academy of Music. The 1,300 division leaders crowded the floor, sitting in front and standing behind; the ward leaders occupied the stage, re-enforcing the executive committee and buttressed by a body of vice-presidents chosen solely from among the financial contributors to the preliminary campaign.

With delegates taken care of the Academy doors were thrown wide open. There was nothing secret. The people were told the organization was a piece of machinery created for their use. They were invited to observe its workings and to indorse its aims if they met with popular approval. And the public crowded in. They filled every available space remaining in the hail, balcony on balcony, and those unable to get inside milled round the corner of the building like some vast human stampede, for a new thing was being born in Philadelphia.

Reform conventions had been held before in the City of Brotherly Love, but here was an organization that was different. Its programme of reform was limited and definite. It did not undertake to reconstruct the nation nor the State. It professed frankly to be Republican; it proposed sharply and immediately to reform the Republican management of the Republican city of Philadelphia, and there was appeal in this very idea of such a limiting of scope—appeal and the promise of success because the aim was so direct.

In the enforced absence of the chairman of the executive committee, Victor Rollinson as vice chairman presided, and the audience felt at once the stoutness of his hand upon the rein, and it liked it because it was stout. Everybody knew that Rollinson never courted popularity. He went his strong, deliberate, reasoned way, and if people went with him, well and good; if they did not, Rollinson went on just the same. But everybody was going with him to-day, for from the

first vice-president on the platform to the last division leader in the hall, everybody thought he knew what was going to happen.

The convention, however, experienced its first thrill in the joy of self-discovery. These delegates had worked in loneliness in their respective divisions for more than a year, plodding patiently in hope and faith, but each with the desperate feeling that he was a solitary navigator on unknown seas. Sometimes a man in a division had gathered in the twelve months no more than a handful of open adherents of his cause; and although he had seen some other division leaders of his ward, he had never seen the other division leaders of the city. He took their existence solely upon the word of others; and he had come out almost timidly to this vast meeting place half wondering if he and a few others were not to make themselves absurd by an exposure of the smallness and insignificance of their numbers.

When such men discovered the great hall filling rapidly; when they stood up and looked round them, into a sea of faces, each of which had a few minutes before been as anxious as their own, and when they recognized, moreover, that this was not a mere mass-meeting, but an aggregation of trained, experienced vote-getters—and that there were so many, many of them—their spirits soared swiftly. Hearts leaped, eyes brightened, greetings and exultations were shouted. Songs began to rise, rallying, manly, fighting songs. They sang "Marching Through Georgia" and "Over There"; when the band led them they shouted their very lungs out with the "Star Spangled Banner."

And the citizens on the platform experienced the same kind of a thrill as the humbler division workers when they looked down and saw for the first time the men whom they were to lead, and who, in turn, were to lead the voters of the city to the polls. It was like a huge training camp of political officers, and not a little of the inspiration afforded came from the fact

that men of every stripe in the city's life were represented.

There, for instance, in the orchestra seats was the head of a chain of retail drug stores, who had a flare for people and was the leader of a division out in the suburbs, where he had rallied millionaires and small shopkeepers alike to the slogan of a better city. Beside him was a well-known music teacher of the city, a man of Polish extraction and Polish enthusiasms. His division was the block downtown in which his studio was located.

And there, all around them, were hundreds of men, some of them of the humblest type, mere unskilled workers, but with a certain instinct for neighbourliness, a moderate capacity for leadership, and a yearning for better government in the city of Philadelphia.

The wants of the mass of these people were very simple, but very definite. An honest administration of gas and water, of police, fire and street departments, the magistrates' courts and the division of housing and sanitation, would have summed up their demands; for these were the parts of the city's government that touched them nearest. For them they had come out to fight.

But if the men on the platform got inspiration from looking at the men on the floor, the men on the floor got inspiration from looking into the faces of their ward leaders and financial supporters, and the volume of this inspiration was increased as one by one these men were identified and pointed out—a prominent banker, two great manufacturers, a score of professional men, and here and there a citizen whose name connected him with families which had been prominent in the city's life since the days of the founder. And all stood, to-day, on the democratic level, all were united by a common desire to make their home town a better place to live in.

Everybody vibrated to the recognition of this fact,

Victor Rollinson with the others. Standing up, he lifted his gavel for quiet. In the hush that grew gradually until silence was complete, the gavel fell and the convention was in session.

Father McDermott and the Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins lifted their voices in prayer.

"Fellow Philadelphians!" announced the chairman, and something pregnant in his tone put every hearer on edge. "There is one man who would rather be here to-night than anywhere else in America."

For a moment the house was breathless and then broke into tumultuous applause with shouts of "Archer! Archer! Three cheers for Jerry Archer!"

"And," went on Victor, "a man we would rather see here to-night than any other in all the world."

Again the convention shouted and stamped its approbation of the chairman's graceful turn.

"Now let me read you something," Victor proposed. He held in his hand a slip of paper, and began:

Jeremiah T. Archer's wound has passed the limit of possible infection and is practically healed. All danger of a relapse is past and his recovery assured.

(Signed)

RIGLON,
TYSON,
GALLAGHER,
POTTER,

Physicians in Charge.

The spontaneous outburst with which this statement was greeted showed that up to now every heart had been tormented by some lingering vestige of apprehension for the condition of their beloved leader.

"And now let me tell you one thing more," added Victor.

"Mr. Archer is sitting up in bed, with a telephone at his ear, and he is hearing everything that is said in this first convention of the Real Republicans of Philadelphia. He heard your shouting at his name, he heard me read the report of his physicians, and he heard

your reception of it. I have no doubt he is very happy."

The audience was clearly startled and held itself in suspense for a moment while contemplating the wonders of modern science; then a pleased look grew on every face and, although applause would appear to have exhausted itself, cheers and a fresh wave of hand-clapping broke out, with some irrespressibles shouting, amid much laughter, "Hello, Jerry!" and "How-do, Jerry!"

"Now," said Victor, "there is one thing I want him to hear before we get any further. I want him to hear himself nominated for the next Mayor of Philadelphia!"

Again the convention was breathless for a moment, and then there was a clatter, for the audience rose to its feet as one man and stood open-mouthed in a kind of awed silence, as if it, too, were anxious to hear the same thing, and was poised and waiting to be led into doing its part. This docile silence was a far more impressive demonstration of the place Jerry Archer held in the hearts of his organization than any shouting or applause could have been, and Victor appreciated this as he let the delegates stand for a moment wondering how the thing desired was to be accomplished, and then with a wave of his gavel settled them again into their seats, but with one man still standing, down near the front on the chairman's left.

"I recognize," said Victor, looking straight at this man, "Delegate James Mallory, of Kensington, a citizen who has been a division leader in every reform fight in twenty years, and who said once that he would never lead another, but he is on the firing line to-day. Delegate Mallory!"

It was indeed our old acquaintance Jim Mallory, whom Jerry had encountered that night on the curb, in Kensington, while debating with Sandy Oakes, and who had taught Jerry much in that few minutes that he had since put into practice in the building of the Real Republican organization.

"I nominate," began Mallory, waving his hand and greatly excited, "I nominate Jerry Archer for Mayor of Philadelphia on the Real Republican ticket."

Mallory's voice was hoarse, his pose inelegant, his whole appearance that of a man of the working class to which he belonged, but this—the fact that to such a man, instead of to one capable of an eloquent speech had been entrusted the making of this important nomination—was the final touch needed to make the mass of delegates realize the essential democracy of their organization. They received Mallory's words with cheer on cheer; they rose once more to their feet; they stamped, they whistled, they did all or any of those things which a mass of free-born American citizens often chooses to do to secure adequate expression of its emotions.

When they had had their way sufficiently, Rollinson calmed them with his gavel and brought them again to their seats, but this time with a red-faced man half-way back in the centre clinging to the chair in front of him for support, while he maintained his upright position with difficulty against a rising tide of embarrassment and modesty within.

"I recognize now," declared the chair, "a delegation from a ward that has been much maligned and has had its reputation impaired by the acts of people imported into it for political purposes, but which, none the less, contains within its boundaries some of the best citizens of Philadelphia. Delegate Kelly, of the Fifth Ward!"

This, of course, was Jerry's friend Michael, the Good Samaritan of his encounter with Strongburger's club. Slowly and painfully had Kelly been enlightened as to what was the duty of good citizens in things political, and only within six months had he come definitely to stand and work for the better day in Philadelphia; but once his feet were planted on the new ground, his loyalty was unquestioned.

"Kelly! Kelly! Spiel, Kelly, spiell" shouted friends all over the floor.

But Kelly was finding it difficult to "spiel." His red face grew redder; he coughed and was near sitting down. Defiantly he forced himself into a speaking pose, and then treacherously his voice failed him—and his knees.

"I second——" he croaked, waved his hands helplessly, and sank perspiring into his seat.

"—the nomination!" amended scores of voices amid widespread laughter at the hitherto unsuspected bashfulness of Kelly.

"Moved and seconded that Jeremiah T. Archer be nominated by acclamation for Mayor of Philadelphia," declared the chair.

"Question," shouted the house.

"All in favour——"

A giant voice bellowed one vast tremendous "Aye"—a voice that made the old building vibrate in every nook and cranny, and won its way quickly into the streets, into the ears of the crowd, on to the bulletin boards of newspapers, and straightway into headlines.

Jerry, at the hospital, lifted the receiver from his head, and turned with an almost frightened look to Ruth, who also sat "listening in" on the great demonstration.

"Jerry!" she exclaimed, mad with joy, and dropped the telephone to fling her arms about her lover.

"They've done it!" he gasped when he had responded to her embrace and disengaged himself from it, and for a moment Jerry looked entirely desperate; then a humorous quirk appeared at the corners of his mouth as he added: "They've taken advantage of a helpless man.

"It just goes to show that you never can trust a politician, doesn't it?" went on Jerry ruefully. "I never suspected Victor Kollinson was a politician, but he is. He is an unscrupulous boss. He is manipulating those poor fellows down there like—like——"

"As you would have manipulated them if you had been there," accused Ruth laughingly.

"No! No!" protested Jerry, "I would not have manipulated them at all. I was just going to point out Victor to them and they would have known what to do."

The practical mind of Ruth shifted from retrospect to prospect.

"Of course you'll be elected," she suggested.

"I hope so, naturally," smiled Jerry, but felt suddenly doubtful on the point. "I'm tired, I think."

He laid the receiver on the table and sank back on the bed.

"You must be," purred Ruth, as she made a great to-do over adjusting his pillows. "All that excitement!"

The nurse, hovering in the background, appeared now with a glass and a spoon.

"Thrills enough for one night," declared Ruth. "I'm going to leave you now. But oh, isn't it wonderful, wonderful, wonderful! That you saved papa's life, that you are going to get well, and that now you're going to be Mayor."

"Listens very pleasantly when you put it that way," admitted Jerry, with a smile.

"Oh, you dissembler! You know you're just tickled to death!"

"That's because, most wonderful of all, I'm going to marry you," whispered Jerry, coaxing her to come again into his arms. Ruth snuggled there for an ecstatic moment.

"Oh, I am so—so happy and contented," she sighed.

"Same here," murmured Jerry into the hair about her ear, and looked very reluctant when Ruth prepared to leave.

"Papa will come to see you to-morrow," she announced, "though the doctor says he can only stay five minutes."

"That will be very forgiving of him," remarked Jerry, drily.

A tiny frown puckered Ruth's brow.

"Now, Jerry, it is uncharitable of you to maintain that satirical attitude," she admonished.

"All right, I won't then," assented Jerry, somewhat too easily to satisfy that hypercritical young lady, but there cannot be too much fault-finding with a convalescent.

"Poor Aurentsky!" sighed Jerry, suddenly grave. "I keep thinking of him."

"And poor Sylvy!" echoed Ruth, quite as sympathetically. "In the midst of all our own happiness it would be easy to forget them."

"Yes," reflected Jerry, "it is easy to forget the Aurentskys of life, but we must not let ourselves do it. We must not let Philadelphia do it."

But Ruth positively could not keep herself sad over some other body's grief when her own heart was so full of pride and joy. She went home happy, thrillingly happy.

Meanwhile, there was the convention still in session.

"It is customary for a political convention to adopt its platform before it proceeds to nominations," the chairman was declaring, "but in this case our platform was a person. In naming Jeremiah T. Archer as our choice for the Republican nomination for Mayor of Philadelphia at the coming primaries, we have adopted a platform that Philadelphia already understands and has faith in."

From this point forward, however, the convention fell more nearly into the normal stride of bodies of its kind. Committees were appointed, a short declaration of principles was adopted, and the list of nominations was completed. Harmony prevailed and enthusiasm continued high. Some time in the early hours of morning the convention adjourned and the delegates went home. The issue was drawn and the campaign had begun.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

JERRY AT THE HELM

JEREMIAH THOMAS ARCHER, like the healthy young animal he was, made a rapid convalescence. Two weeks after he was stabbed, he left the hospital and went home with his wound almost healed. Ten days after that he walked into Real Republican headquarters and took charge of his own campaign. The wheels of the organization which he had built so painstakingly had already been set in motion, but with the presence of Jerry at the helm there was an immediate speeding up, and only a few days sufficed to show that keen young man how necessary speeding up was.

His was so far only a skeleton army; yet in that first gloating week it had grown flabby with overconfidence. The sudden burst of enthusiasm with which the newspapers and the city had greeted the emergence of the Real Republican organization and the candidates which it had selected had lulled his followers into visions of easy victory. Jerry cherished no such dreams. Instead, the possibility of defeat loomed before him like a dismal spectre.

"We've got to put something besides emotion and spectacular hurrah into this campaign," he told his executive committee. "The people are interested. Now we've got to get them enlisted. The way to do that is to make it clear to them that this is their fight. We are only their servants. They've got to know what we are doing here every minute and just how we're getting along. They've got to understand that if the verdict is against us at the end, it isn't Rollinson and

Archer and you gentlemen who are beaten, but it's the people."

With this thought in his mind he invented the slogan of the campaign—"TELL THE PEOPLE." He sent his speakers out to tell the people everything about conditions in the city of Philadelphia, to inform them of what they did not know, and to remind them of what they had forgotten. He applied this principle to the conduct of the campaign itself. Reporters were given the run of headquarters.

"Turn on the spotlight," laughed Jerry. "Let 'em see what we're doing and how we're trying to do it."

His own desk was in the centre of a big room. Everybody who wanted to see him could see him, and see everybody else who saw him, or, if they cared to eavesdrop, could overhear what was said.

The policy of publicity applied also to the campaign fund. "No debts! We've got so much money this week, and we want so much for next week," Jerry used to tell the reporters every Monday morning.

The names of the contributors were openly given. If a man sent in money and asked that his name be concealed, the money was returned. This offended some—but the effect on the people at large was healthy.

In the meantime, Jerry, pale and perturbed, watched every detail of the fight. His lieutenants, his mail, his telephones kept him constantly advised of the manoeuvres of the enemy. He was not up at first to attempting to make speeches himself, but acquired the habit of blurting out a short, terse daily statement to the reporters, which the newspapers soon began to bracket and carry in every issue to the far corners of the city.

"There's too much talk of personalities in this campaign," Jerry protested in one of these. "There is too much Archer talk in it. This is not a campaign of persons, it is a campaign of issues. It's not, Are you for Archer or against him? It is, Are you for better government in Philadelphia? Do you want officers clubbing citizens at the polls? Do you want gunmen as-

saulting them in alleys? Do you want policemen invading your homes and frightening your wives into hysterics because husbands dare express the right of free-born citizens? Do you want police magistrates taking orders from a ward-heeler instead of from the law? Do you want contractors deciding what streets will be repaired or paved, and writing their own specifications, and naming their own prices, and appointing their own inspectors? Things like this are the issues in this campaign."

Nevertheless, these very things involved an issue of persons. It was hard, however, for Jerry to learn to swallow his modesty and stand up and say, "I—I, I—I, I—I, will do this or do that"; but he did learn to do it—to shout out his final defiance with:

"If you want these things vote for Jim Farrell. If you don't, vote for me."

After a few more days, too, the young man found it impossible to keep off the stump, and he appeared every noontime to talk to the crowds on the street corners from the back of an automobile, and again at night, speaking usually from the same sort of a platform; but his speeches were never long, sometimes only a paragraph or two, and always with that note of ringing challenge in them that marked the man of bold fighting blood. Always, too, he dinned into the ears of his auditors that his was a Republican organization.

"There are 30,000 Democratic votes in Philadelphia; there are nearly 300,000 Republican ones," he would remind them. "Good government in Philadelphia is something for which the Republican party alone is responsible. This is a Republican fight. If I'm not nominated at the primaries, you'll find me voting on election day for Jim Farrell. And that's a thing I'd hate to do, because a vote for Farrell is a vote for Vare."

The boldness of this, the squareness and the novelty of it, carried far and wide. People stopped to consider. The level-eyed courage of Jerry amazed and provoked thought.

It was one night in Kensington, toward the end of the campaign, that Jerry was for the first time tempted into making anything like an extended speech. His wrath had been aroused by a report that the mill owners almost to a man were against him, and that they were pursuing their old tactics of advising their workmen to vote for the machine candidates as a matter of self-interest. The automobile which served him as a platform was standing at an intersection of streets where the mills of the greatest textile manufacturing centre in the world loomed all around him.

"Don't let your employer tell you to fight against the Republican ticket, because it is a fight against the tariff," he shouted. "That is false. If your employer favours the contractor-bosses, he must have some other reason. What do you think it is? I do not know, but voters of Kensington, I have my suspicions.

"We have heard, for instance," and there was a peculiar sarcastic drawl on the utterance of these sentences, "that there are manufacturers using ten times the supply of water they are paying for. We have heard of manufacturers operating in buildings that are fire-traps. We have heard of others who, contrary to law, are operating machinery and processes that are dangerous to life and limb of employees.

"Now it may be that the bosses are voting for this Administration because it lets them steal water, because it lets them evade the law as to fire-trap buildings, because its influence makes state inspectors careless about safety devices. But if that is a reason why the employer should vote for the machine, it is a pretty good reason why you should vote against it. Somebody has to pay for the water. If the manufacturer doesn't the taxpayer and the rentpayer do. Now, are you going to vote to pay for your boss's water? Are you going to vote for the privilege of risking your lives in the boss's cheap old fire-trap? Are you going to vote for the chance to have your son's arm cut off or

your daughter's fingers mangled, just to make some more dividends for mill owners?"

Amid wild cheers Jerry rolled out of Kensington that night with the mass of voters bound to him more solidly than in any other part of the city. Nevertheless, the campaign as a whole did not seem to be going well. There was too much lukewarmness, too much stolidity. The old city, true to her character and her traditions, refused to be roused. She was stirred widely but not deeply. The great impregnable fortresses of public opinion had been breached but were still uncarried. Men, elements, forces that should have been fighting with Jerry held coolly off from him.

The so-called best element in the community looked on his effort rather indulgently, with a mild, speculative interest. The masses had begun to move, but the classes, layer upon layer, like rock strata in a precipice, seemed to lift themselves above him, critical and aloof. When Jerry saw that they regarded themselves as spectators he set to work desperately to break up these crusts and layers into individuals and to devise means of going after them one by one. For the purpose of, as it were, raiding and capturing key-men, he appointed a special committee to work among prominent manufacturers, another to work among leading merchants, and a third to work among eminent professional men. Even a Woman's Real Republican committee was organized, with Mrs. John Thomas O'Day as chairman.

"What is the use?" Mrs. O'Day protested at first. "We women can't vote."

"But you win votes," said Jerry, "and it will be good political training for the day when you do vote. Besides, any proof that women can be an effective power in politics will help to hasten the day of her enfranchisement."

Yielding in part to this argument and in part to Jerry's powers of persuasion, Mrs. O'Day went to work with her usual energy. Within forty-eight hours

THE CRACK IN THE BELL

407

she had a committee-woman in every ward of the city; within two weeks she had one in every division. Over in the Fourth Ward Bridget O'Riley was not the mere leader of a division, like her son, but, bless you, leader of her ward! And the women were making votes. Over washtubs, over back-yard fences, across alleys and areaways their talk went on, as well as in clubs and knitting circles; and in an astonishing number of cases what the women decided was found to be what the man of the house afterward voted.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE THICK OF THE FIGHT

WHEN Jerry dealt with the classes as individuals he encountered many things that disquieted him. One was the number of good citizens who had not registered. He remembered that in the Town Meeting campaign there were said to be forty thousand unregistered voters. One of the things the Real Republican organization had been most zealous about was the matter of getting "best citizens" registered, yet every day he encountered men who should have been with him who had neglected that formality.

Another disquieting thing was the number of first citizens who were not citizens—that is, they had removed their voting residence to some suburban or country community, often in another State.

"You make me sick! ' Jerry broke out in disgust after hearing this excuse for the twentieth time. "Move back here at once. The city makes you rich. And you, why you with your big store, or you with your great factory, you create some of the most difficult problems of municipal government. You're always around wanting consideration at the hands of officials, seeking 'protection' or demanding it, and you don't even vote here. Is that right, now? I ask you, is it?"

And after the young man had blurted out his frank disgust, which was the less offensive because it was so obviously honest, he had recourse always next to one of his most persuasive smiles, and it was astonishing to learn how often he won a man's promise to transfer his residence to the city; which is to say, to come back

and do his part to make Philadelphia a better governed city.

Most irritating of all to Jerry in these days was to meet the quailing, qualifying, weak-kneed citizen who, with clammy fervour, would declare:

"I am with you, old man, but——"

"I don't want anybody who is with me, 'but!'" snapped Jerry, after he had listened to this formula and its variants for several days. "That's what the weak sisters and lame ducks of citizenship used to tell Rudolph Spreckles and Francis J. Heney when they were forcing through the graft prosecution in San Francisco—the prosecution that produced the overturn that has made California a well-governed State and sent Hiram Johnson and James D. Phelan to the United States Senate—they used to say, 'We are with you, 'but.'" Voters of Philadelphia, I don't want anybody to come to me and say 'I'm with you, but.' You are with me or you are not with me—where are you?"

"But you're making lots of people angry," some of his advisers protested.

"It makes no difference how many are angry if I'm licked," he retorted. "While, if we win, the administration will have a chance to show for itself."

The conviction that certain of the leading citizens were studiously ignoring him, grew on Jerry and maddened him. Day after day his canvassers came back with "No opinion," "Mind not made up," "Uncertain" or "Doubtful," written against the name of some man that Jerry thought should be fighting beside him whole-heartedly.

"Doubtful! Say!" he boiled over at last. "They'll have to build the fences longer if every leading citizen of Philadelphia is going to climb up on 'em and stay there till election's over."

"Where are our prominent citizens?" he pleaded that night from the back of his automobile. "Some are on the fence. Some are behind the breastworks of the enemy. Where are the rest?"

"In Philadelphia's workshops efficiency resides. It turns the raw materials of the world into the manufactured products that will be sold to-morrow in every city of the civilized world. Has it no genius to employ in turning this vast raw material of citizenship into the best-governed city of America, instead of allowing it to become frankly the worst? Apparently not."

It was while in the mood induced by chains of thought like these that Jerry went with his troubles to that shrewd old political observer who has been known in these pages as the Sage of Philadelphia.

"You ought to smoke these people out," agreed the sage. "Philadelphia is singularly regardful of its great names. It likes to follow its leaders."

"But how can it follow them if it doesn't know where they stand?" protested Jerry.

"Why, there you are!" affirmed the sage, and locked his lips and looked straight at Jerry, as if the next step were fairly obvious.

"By George!" declared Jerry, "I know what I'll do. Watch me!"

The next morning he announced through the papers: "To-night I shall call the roll on five leading manufacturers, five leading merchants, five leading lawyers, five leading doctors, and five leading ministers. I shall ask where they stand in this campaign and why; and I shall be prepared to give to the voters the answers these gentlemen have given to my workers."

This proposal shocked and startled. Aristocratic Philadelphia, business Philadelphia, conservative Philadelphia regarded the suggestion as blatant and impertinent, and disliked it. Their names were sacred. But with Jerry nothing was sacred except good government.

"What's the matter with 'em?" demanded the young man that night as he called the roll and read off their answers to the canvassers' reports. "Don't they want good government? Or don't they think I

can give it to 'em?" (Jerry was calloused now to the emphasis on the ego.)

His audiences laughed and jeered. But the twenty-five gentlemen whose names had been called were mad, offended, humiliated. They were also smoked out, however, and rushed most of them into the newspapers with disclaimers of one sort or another. This action was in itself highly significant. It showed that not one of these men was willing to be openly recognized as a supporter of the Contractor-ticket. And while the manœuvre had made twenty-five voters mad, it had saved the allegiance of thousands. It was the kind of vote-trading that wins elections. There was, however, one particular class of these evasive gentlemen who drew the keenest shafts of Jerry's scorn.

These were a professional type of men, sometimes clergymen, and invariably religious. They were engaged always in some perfectly commendable philanthropic or educational or institutional work—men whose moral character was supposedly irreproachable, men who could preach like prophets or pray like saints and who could and did exhort their students or their wards till tears ran down their faces—yet not one of them had lifted a voice for the good government campaign.

When Real Republican workers talked to these men, they were met at first with an attitude of lofty disinterestedness. The gentlemen professed hardly to be aware that a campaign was in progress. When pressed they came down to personal defense of the man whom Jerry was assailing. They told how fond Farrell was of children, how good to his family, how true this man or that was to his friends, and so forth.

When reports like this came into headquarters Jerry was not too busy to single such men out for personal attention. He pressed them hotly from breastwork to breastwork, until at last they confessed: "I am a trustee or an administrator of this institution or that institution, which is dependent for its life upon

appropriation from the State Legislature. If I take a stand against these men you are fighting they will cripple my institution by withholding appropriations."

"Oh, for a little courage! Oh, for a little bravery! No wonder the whole State submits so tamely when every student who comes to your institution is taught day by day to bow the neck because you play the sycophant and sell your souls for an appropriation."

These were hot arraignments and they were unctuous, but more and more they convinced the great rank and file of the voters that Jeremiah T. Archer was honest, and a doughty champion. More and more, what the people saw in him was a young man in white-hot earnest, who never paused to split a hair. He made the issue clear—Real Republicans or false ones: Men were white or men were black; they were for him or against him.

Sharp distinctions like this are always unfair, and none knew it better than Jerry, but he knew also that sharp distinctions were necessary in order to align these people on something and separate the sheep from the goats. Every day he let loose a ringing challenge of some sort that went speeding over the city, and as it sped men flocked to hear him speak. His utter frankness charmed them as much as his sound sense and his courage.

"I'm not going to promise you ideal government," he burst out one night in South Philadelphia, "because I have got any ideal men. I'm not an ideal man myself. But I've got ideals, and I'll tell you what kind of a government you've got now at City Hall."

There were, one way and another, some twelve thousand employees on the payroll of the city and these were easily made to feel that their bread and butter depended upon defeating the Archer ticket. The spectacle of this vast army, fed by the city, coolly going into action against him, attracted Jerry's aroused attention and drew his hottest fire.

"Now, of course," he declared. "Every man in

office has got a right to vote as he pleases, and to use his influence as he pleases, within the limits prescribed by law, but I want to serve one notice on the jobholders of Philadelphia right now. There are men in office who have made it a practice for years to violate the Sherman law. Such men, if I go into office, will go out, and they will be punished, too.

"I allow no man to outdo me in admiration for the character of Rudolph Blankenburg, but I want to tell you that if I'm elected, there will be no 'forgetting the past.' The past will be remembered. Understand? There'll be no harmony meetings, no good-fellows-talk, no soft condoning, and no tolerating of impudent and officious men who, for years, have used their public offices as a vantage point from which to oppress and tyrannize the voters.

"We'll throw 'em out!"

Whenever Jerry repeated this speech, and he repeated it often, it was greeted with roars of applause. "Throw-'em-out Archer," some of the reporters began to call him.

"And when it comes to filling the places made vacant by the cattle we have turned out," Jerry used to go on, "I'll shock some of my political purist friends by saying that so far as the law permits and my influence can extend, we'll fill those vacancies exclusively from the men who have supported our campaign. Those are the men who have proved themselves in sympathy with good government and they are the men from whom we can expect the kind of service that makes for good government. Moreover—and here's another shock for the purists—the men in office will be expected to work for the best interests of this organization, and the way they can do that is by working for the best interests of the city of Philadelphia."

But some of Jerry's most ardent followers were alarmed by this. "There's such a thing as being too practical," they urged. "Once you open the door in this fashion where are you going to draw the line?"

How are you going to keep from building up an office-fed machine that will not mistake its aim and go to work for its own emoluments—become, in fact, just another private machine whose design is pap?"

But Archer was as frank as ever.

"That is a possible, almost a logical development of any party organization, I admit; and whenever our machine goes bad, I shall expect the people to get up and smash it. For my own administration I shall take the responsibility and undertake to draw the line. My point is that a citizen ought not to lose his rights simply because he becomes an officeholder. He may still do politics. Woodrow Wilson does them in the White House; Theodore Roosevelt did them in the same place; Hiram Johnson did them in Sacramento. It is surely right to do all in your power to create and preserve a concert of public opinion in favour of what you believe to be best for the city, the State, or the nation. But when it comes to the nature of the political activities of public officials I draw some very rigid distinctions."

It was inevitable that a campaign so aggressively pushed should begin to make its inroads. The regular Republican organization was frightened, but it showed defiance and fought back savagely. It resorted, as usual, to floods of vituperation. It whispered scandal: and it sought to make capital out of an impugnement of Jerry's motives, openly charging that he was in secret league with Buckingham. In proof of this it cited his visit to the offices of the latter after the breach over the loan, his saving of the financier's life, and the newspaper story of the romance with his daughter. "Ever hear him say a word against Buckingham in any of his speeches?" they used to challenge.

Here delicacy stopped the bold mouth of Jerry.

His inclination was to shout out defiantly: "I love Ruth Buckingham and intend to marry her. I scorn the political and financial methods of Willard H. Buckingham; I have fought them at the risk of all I

hold dear, and I will continue to fight them." But consideration for Ruth prevented him from making the last part of this speech, and a man's own natural determination to keep the name of his future wife from being bandied about by politicians forbade the first part of it.

People were found, too, to believe these charges and to misinterpret Jerry's silence regarding them, and it was while ways and means of meeting this issue were being devised that the trial of Jacob Aurentzky came off. Public opinion had been very much stirred and very determined in the matter of the peddler and his crime. Philadelphia, at least as much as any other American city, likes to feel secure. People of every class shiver at the thought of a frenzied man running amuck with a butcher knife, whether his grievance be fancied or real, his victims high or low. And the city officials, recognizing this sentiment and anxious to show their zeal at this time, particularly in the pursuit of evil doers, had hurried Aurentzky to trial.

The announcement that Victor Rollinson would defend the man proved a fresh sensation and threw Jerry's enemies into glee because of the prominence of Victor in his campaign, for this was sure to aid in the general impression his opponents were trying to create that the so-called Real Republicans were but a socialist movement in disguise.

CHAPTER XL

THE TRIAL OF JACOB AURENTSKY

THE proceedings in the case of *The People vs. Jacob Aurentsky* presented a rather melancholy aspect. Not even the conspicuous figures who gathered in the room could relieve the scene of its drabness. A panel was in the jury box. Willard H. Buckingham and Jeremiah T. Archer, chief among the witnesses, sat within the rail as guests of the court, while Rachel Aurentsky and her brood of children huddled their woe on a row of chairs, also inside the space reserved for attorneys and officers of the court. Sylvy sat beside Victor. Her beauty to-day was sad, yet, amid the general air of gloom, the clearness of her skin, the fine chiselling of features, the expression of faith and trust with which from time to time she looked up into the face of the lawyer at her side, represented the one feature of the scene from which an onlooker might have drawn a gleam of inspiration.

Nevertheless, the centre of dramatic interest in the picture lay where it belonged, in the prisoner at the bar, rabbit-eyed, tousle-haired, wildly whiskered Jacob Aurentsky. His tall, angular figure lay, all knots and joints, tangled dejectedly in his chair, where he twisted nervously from time to time, while upon his face was an expression that varied. At times it was merely that of distrust and stupidity; at others it was that of a man who recognizes himself as the victim of a chain of unescapable circumstances, a sort of official scapegoat.

If that innocent creature of the flocks of ancient Judah, the scapegoat, upon which the high priest each year laid hands and sent him off into the desert, official

bearer of the sins of the tribes—if that entirely guiltless animal could have known what the ceremony meant and could have looked his protest at the jewel-breasted high priest, the expression of his animal eyes must have been something such as the expression of these starting orbs of Aurentsky as he ventured an occasional shy look at the judge, at the jury, and at the spectators who had come to see him made an example of.

But of course, this could only apply to the mental state of Aurentsky. Any one who could view Aurentsky objectively knew that he had committed a crime against the peace and dignity of a mighty commonwealth and against the life of a man who had never harmed him. Recognition of this fact was revealed in the apathetic attitude of the man's own attorney. Only Sylvy's face expressed hope. Victor sat rather stolidly while the jurors were being examined. He asked no questions himself.

"We pass," said the District Attorney time after time.

"Pass," echoed Victor indifferently.

"We are satisfied, Your Honour," said the District Attorney, when he had got twelve good men and true.

"Satisfied!" said Victor, making marks on his pad of yellow paper.

The District Attorney made the opening statement of the facts he intended to prove, and this statement was brief.

"Put in your case," directed the Court.

Buckingham was called first.

"Did the defendant strike you as proceeding calmly and deliberately to his attack?" asked Victor when time for cross-examination had arrived.

"On the contrary," said Mr. Buckingham truthfully, "the man was wildly excited."

"Did he say anything?"

"He was mouthing something but it was nothing intelligible to me."

This was the extent of Victor's cross-examination.

Jerry Archer was next called, and as the assault was committed upon his person, every ear bent forward to hear his testimony, but his manner must have disappointed the sensation-mongers. Though the attack had cost him pain and all but taken his life, it was evident that he gave his testimony regretfully and with no feeling of enmity for the man who had stabbed him.

Victor asked the same two questions in cross-examination as he had asked of Buckingham and Jerry was equally agreed that Aurenstsky had been wildly excited and that he was mouthing something, some form of words which the young man reluctantly but honestly admitted sounded to him like a slogan of some sort.

"Victor Rollinson!" announced the District Attorney. It only added one more unusual feature to this unusual case when the attorney for the defendant was called as a witness for the prosecution.

Victor gravely but tersely gave his testimony and when the prosecutor was satisfied, cross-examined himself as to what if anything Aurenstsky had said, testifying that:

"For Isadore! For Isadore!" was what Aurenstsky was muttering as he attempted to strike. Then he retired to his place at the prisoner's side.

Evidence that the man had once been arrested on a charge of receiving stolen property was next introduced, and that concluded the case for the people.

The jury, sensing something mysterious in the atmosphere, began to display a more absorbed interest in the case. There was a riddle in it somewhere, and their eyes wandered from the faces of counsel to the face of the Judge and then back to the prisoner. It would hardly have been strange if some of them, seeing this restless but apparently unlistening man, twisting about in his chair with that rabbit look of startled, uncomprehending fear in his eye, had not felt a twinge of conscience as if they might be trying a mental incompetent.

But Victor Rollinson made no suggestion of the

sort and brought the oddness of the situation to its climax when as attorney for the defendant he declined to offer any testimony in behalf of his client.

The District Attorney looked his own surprise at this, but arose promptly to present his argument; it was brief but forcible. It arraigned Aurentsky as "a type of that alien who infests American shores——"

"Your Honour," interrupted Victor, "the line of counsel's argument impels me to ask for permission to reopen our case and put the defendant on the stand long enough to show that he is not an alien. He has his naturalization papers."

"Has he?" inquired the prosecutor, pausing in full flight. "Then I will stipulate that and amend my argument to the jury by saying he is a type of the foreign-born citizen who comes here to the protection and employment of our institutions, and seems to embrace them, but remains an alien at heart; in fact, cherishes a hatred of everything American."

To this Victor merely nodded grimly and continued to possess his soul in patience even when the prosecutor animadverted to the arrest for receiving stolen property and argued from it that this man was a criminal and a consort of criminals.

For a moment, as the District Attorney made this charge, the prisoner's dark eyes lighted and he clasped and unclasped his long nervous fingers, while his lips appeared to frame a protest that his voice did not utter. Victor, noting everything, noted this and that the jury observed it also.

"No argument," said Victor, making meaningless marks on his pad of yellow paper.

"If you're through with me, I'll get back to business," whispered Buckingham to the District Attorney as the latter sat down.

Victor Rollinson heard this whisper.

"Wait!" he said, and lifted a long, straight finger before the face of Buckingham like some kind of warning or admonition. Mr. Buckingham was nettled, but

there was something in the thrust of Victor's jaw that insured his waiting.

The court instructed the jury simply. The jury filed out and in five minutes filed back. The whole proceedings from the time when the case was called to the time when the jury stood in its box with a verdict in the hands of its foreman had occupied but one hour and five minutes.

"Guilty," read the foreman, "but with recommendations to mercy."

"To mercy!" gasped Sylvy under her breath and fixed her melting eyes upon the face of the Judge—Judge Boynton—was he a judge of mercy as well as of the law?

The effect of this verdict was to increase rather than to lessen the tension of suspense and every eye was turned toward the bench.

The Judge hesitated a moment and cleared his throat. There was a provision of the old Roman law that no judge might pass sentence upon a man the same day that he was found guilty. That was to give time for the cooling of passions that may have been roused by the trial and prevent him from pronouncing a sentence too severe or too lenient under the influence of emotions of the moment. But Pennsylvania does not follow the Roman law.

"Prisoner at the bar, stand up!" The voice was not unkindly; the eye of the Judge as he fixed it upon the man was the eye of a judge who tried to be just, who, regarding solemnly his oath to the people, acknowledged also an oath to some higher being, and an obligation to do a more absolute and impartial justice than the cold operation of statute law could insure. Aurentsky turned a questioning glance at his attorney to make sure he heard aright and then slowly undoubled his lank figure and stood gazing at the Judge, so frail that it seemed a breath would have blown him over.

"Have you anything to say before sentence is pronounced upon you?"

"Yes, yes," exclaimed the prisoner in a voice hoarse with the hysteria of passion—"Dot Buckingham—dot murderer—he kill mein little Izzie." Aurentsky's manner had become wildly excited, as with one long bony arm he reached out and seemed almost to touch the face of Buckingham when he pilloried him with the quivering of his long index finger.

"This is insanity!" exclaimed Buckingham, starting up and glaring at the Judge.

The Judge frowned and looked reproachfully at Rollinson, but his voice was still kindly as he said to the prisoner:

"Calm yourself, Aurentsky, and tell me what you mean by making such a preposterous charge."

It was obvious that Aurentsky tried to do this, but when his black eyes wandered to the face of Buckingham they blazed with animal-like hatred and it was apparent that he with difficulty refrained from springing at the man. He did refrain, however, and with an expression of despairing of ever being able to portray or explain the emotions which raged so wildly in his breast, he threw up his hands in a gesture of hopelessness and sank again into his seat.

"Your Honour," exclaimed Victor, stepping quickly into the breach, "the trial of this case is over. I have offered no testimony in defense of this man's act because as a matter of law there was no defense to be offered. The jury has found the only verdict possible; but these twelve men have been as discerning as Your Honour. They have perceived that something lies back of this man's act which, before the great judge of all crime, may seem an act of justification; that that tribunal which need call no witnesses, yet sees and judges all hearts, may explain or extenuate the act—may find it less murderous than it seems to you and to me. I ask your permission now, with the indulgence of the District Attorney, who has done his duty in asking for conviction and punishment—to recite to Your Honour before sentence is passed the story which this man is

unable to tell. It is the story of a shipwrecked citizen-ship.

"This man came here with rosy anticipations of what he should find in America. He came here flying from oppression as to a land of freedom which guarantees safety to all. He came understanding that every citizen may be a part of this great nation and its Government. He did not come to Philadelphia by accident nor because his relatives were here. He came here because he had understood enough of our history to know that American liberty was born in Philadelphia. He came to be near liberty at its very source. He has explained to me that his eyes fell almost with adoration upon the State House in Independence Square; that he passed it reverently, looking up to it as something to be worshipped; that often and often he has crept inside and stood with bared head before the Liberty Bell and looked with awe into that room and at the very table and the implements with which that great document, the Declaration of Independence, was signed. He made his home within a few blocks of this sacred edifice and was overjoyed that he could do so.

"But it was not long before disillusionments came. He was told not to fear the law; that here the citizen himself was the law, that he made the law. But he found himself in a district infested by political Cossacks. He saw men vote who were not entitled to vote; he saw votes counted that were not entitled to be counted; he saw every sort of fraud coolly practised at the polling places; he saw policemen and hired gunmen clubbing and blackjacking and intimidating citizens. He saw the law used to oppress. He saw a man named Maldono who made his living as a professional thief, acting as the division leader for a political party in power, and saw the protection of the law thrown round that man's illegal acts. Finally that foul creature, Joseph Maldono, who after conviction of a felony—in this very court, as Your Honour will remember—was un-

justly pardoned through political influence, and is today martialling the vote of his division for the Vare interest in the coming election, dared to make undesirable addresses to the daughter of Jacob Aurentsky, who sits here at my right."

Victor did not say that Sylvy was beautiful, pure, innocent, and wonderful. The Judge had already discerned that, and the hard look that came into his eyes showed how the manhood of his nature reacted to the implication in Victor's indictment against Maldono.

"Jacob Aurentsky resented that creature's attentions," continued the attorney, "as his daughter resented them, as you would have resented them, and thereby he incurred the enmity of Joseph Maldono. Within three hours thereafter a charge of receiving stolen property was trumped up against Aurentsky, he was arrested by a Philadelphia police officer, held in a Philadelphia police station, threatened, sweated, and frightened through half a night with the fear of a long term of imprisonment, to escape which he was urged to sell his little grocery store at forced sale. That sale and the man's scanty savings, all told, some \$700, were extorted from him by the precious band of thieves who hovered round him that night in jail, and when this money had been divided, part of it to Joe Maldono, and part of it to the Philadelphia police magistrate, that magistrate dismissed the case and Jacob Aurentsky had been beggared. That was his reception by the American institutions of which the District Attorney spoke so feelingly to the jury.

"The effect upon this ardent but unfledged patriot was what we might have expected it to be. A man of his narrow experience of life, with his limited vision, he concluded that America was no better than that despotism from which he had come. He became sour, embittered, and distrustful. Efforts of Mr. Jeremiah T. Archer— that young man who has found so much time in the last two years to try to be neighbour to the

humblest citizens of Philadelphia—to help Aurentsky and punish the men who had robbed him, were met with rebuffs.

“Now, in this state of mind, Your Honour, another and a more distressing calamity overtook Aurentsky, a blow that struck him far deeper than the loss of his money and his little store. It was the loss of his little boy, Izzie, as he has called him just now when so pathetically revealing a father’s heart-broken grief. Isadore died as hundreds of the children of the poor die every year in Philadelphia, cut down by bad sanitation, poor housing, and other unhealthy conditions of residence against which enlightened citizens have battled for years and in some respects still in vain.

“But Jacob Aurentsky took this death less resentfully than you and I might, because of his own ignorance. That grief softened him; it ate out the bitterness in his heart; it broke his spirit. It turned him into a docile, lamblike creature, and for several weeks it appeared as if Aurentsky was permanently a changed man, willing to try once more to restore himself and his family to comfort, and willing, even, to give this great new Republic another trial before he condemned it utterly.”

Rollinson paused as if for breath, and a sympathetic sigh ran round the court-room, which he interrupted by resuming with:

“On the day on which Jacob Aurentsky committed the crime of which he has this morning rightfully been convicted, he went out happily upon his business of itinerant merchandizing. True, his little Isadore was gone, but Aurentsky is a religious man. He had accepted the consolation of Almighty God, and he had cherished a hope of immortality. Moreover, he was resolved to do his duty like a man by his children and his faithful wife. But that day, about 2 o’clock in the afternoon something happened, something that filled the heart of Jacob Aurentsky again with hate; but this time, instead of being a vague hate, widely directed

against the inanimate United States of America, it was directed against one man—Willard H. Buckingham," and Victor turned and pointed one long finger toward where Buckingham sat, apparently as fascinated by the thrall of the attorney's narrative as any one else in the room.

"The thing which happened was that Aurentsky met the doctor who attended his son in his last illness, and that doctor, finding Aurentsky cool and collected, told him then what his consideration would not let him tell him at the time when his grief was fresh. He told him that his little son, Isadore, had been virtually murdered and he told him how."

Rollinson, keenly sensitive to the dramatic values of the situation, paused and let his eye wander round the room, past Court and jurors, searching every face among the crowded and breathless spectators, searching for a single one, and at last appearing to find him.

"That man is here this morning, and I ask that you, Your Honour, before passing sentence on this guilty defendant, will call this physician to the bar of the Court and hear from his lips the story which he, as a matter of duty, told to Aurentsky on that unfortunate day."

"Let him be called," said the Court.

"Doctor Owenbaugh!" announced Victor.

Doctor Owenbaugh sorted himself out of the massed spectators and came forward, a bald, round-faced gentleman with small, shrewd eyes that twinkled in a kindly fashion from behind glasses.

"You attended little Isadore Aurentsky in his final illness?" asked the Court, peering over his spectacles at the doctor.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you describe for the Court the condition in which you found your patient with regard to the healthfulness of the place in which he lived?"

The doctor detailed the situation, the rickety, made-over hive of humanity, with its three floors, its five

families on a floor, and the water carried to the top-floor dwellers in buckets and setting about uncovered to absorb the pestilential germs afloat in the air.

The doctor was revealed by his narrative as a soft-spoken, conscientious man, exceedingly careful of his facts, but as he added one black detail upon another his cheeks became flushed and his utterance tinged by the heat of suppressed feeling.

"Then, in your judgment," anticipated the Court, unable to strain out of his voice the emotions this and Rollinson's narrative had aroused, "the death of little Isadore Aurentsky was directly traceable to the unhealthful conditions of the house in which he was forced to live."

"Undoubtedly!" declared the physician with the ring of conviction in his tones. "In my judgment that house is a death trap to its occupants. Conditions there are breeding typhoid germs enough to infect a whole city."

"But why—why?" declared the indignant Judge, "isn't the place closed up?"

"That is what I want to know," replied Dr. Owenbaugh. "I went to the Chief of the Division of Housing and Sanitation, and he insisted it had been closed up. When I investigated farther I found that the agent for this property is a political factotum of the Ward Leader, and he threatened to 'get' the inspector if he pressed the matter of condemnation. In fact, this agent threatened to bring down upon the man the wrath of his principal, a man of very great power in this city, both financially and otherwise."

"Who was that?" demanded the Judge, indignation again reflected in face and tones.

"Willard H. Buckingham."

Mr. Buckingham started and stared truculently at the doctor but, admonished by the gavel of the court, did not speak.

"Mr. Buckingham was the owner of that property?" intervened Victor Rollinson.

"No, sir; he is the residuary trustee of the owner, who, I was told, lives in Pasadena. I learned that Mr. Buckingham had several times been approached with requests to improve this property, but had always declined on the ground that it was not good policy to interfere with a satisfactory investment."

"And so while the actual owner enjoyed the balmy air of sunny California——" Victor was beginning, when the court interfered with:

And what was it, Doctor Owenbaugh, that you told Aurentsky?"

"Why, I met Aurentsky that day on the street. It was the first time I had seen him since I had sifted out the facts, although the family had often been on my mind, and I stopped to ask him if he had moved as I advised him to. He said he couldn't afford to move. I tried to explain to him just what it meant to keep his children in that atmosphere. I told him the house had been condemned as unfit for human habitation and then went on and explained to him just why the house was permitted to exist and who was responsible for it."

"Did you tell this man Willard H. Buckingham had killed this boy?"

"In so many words, no, but the man seemed to leap to that conclusion, and I did not try to dissuade him, because in my own mind I thought it was a very just conclusion. Of course, I had no idea that any such rash act would follow."

"A just conclusion?" bristled the Court, suddenly very critical. "Do you stand here as a medical man and tell me that Willard H. Buckingham killed this man's son?"

"As a medical man? Certainly not. From a professional standpoint I cannot even say where the typhoid germ came from that killed that particular boy. But I can have an opinion; and personally, not professionally, I do not mind telling Mr. Buckingham that before God he is that boy's murderer, and *probably not that boy's alone.*"

The doctor, as he said this, indulged in no melodramatics; he barely raised his voice, but it carried to all corners of the room and for a moment he turned and set his small gentle eyes upon the face of Buckingham, but this time they were not gentle. There was a hard gleam in them.

"Prisoner remanded for sentence," announced the Court, having suddenly altered his intent in that respect, "and when that sentence is passed it will be the lightest possible, with recommendations for immediate parole. I will see that the State does not add to the wrongs this man has already suffered. Adjourned!"

The gavel fell.

"That is an outrageous farce, a travesty on justice!" declared Buckingham, glaring at the Judge and at Rollinson, as he boldly laid himself liable to contempt of court. "What is the meaning of all this extraneous proceeding? Are the very courts in league with criminals?"

The spectators had started to move, but that savage question of Buckingham's hurled at Rollinson stopped them. There was an instant settling back into seats and a hush of expectancy to see what Rollinson would say. Court was adjourned, but the court-room was in order, the stage still set as for an epilogue of the play, and Victor Rollinson seized the situation for an exercise of that skillful verbal swordplay of which he was known to be a master. Only a man as rash as Buckingham would have dared to challenge him, and, by the time the ambushade, as it amounted, had developed, he was too stubborn and proud to admit his mistake and stayed to the end through a contest the inequality of which became more apparent to the spectators with every moment.

"No," retorted Victor forcefully, "but the courts of America, theoretically at least, are courts of justice, not courts of vengeance. May I ask if you, sir, permit yourself no social sympathy at all?"

"I certainly do, sir," responded Mr. Buckingham snappishly. "I give more to charity than the total income of half the lawyers in this town."

Mr. Rollinson flushed. He disliked Mr. Buckingham's vanity even more than he disliked his hardness of heart.

"I did not mean charity, Mr. Buckingham. I mean that sort of interest in the welfare of the masses which keeps them from becoming objects of charity." Victor, despite his growing temper, was so calculatingly respectful that Mr. Buckingham, not perceiving its calculations, was somewhat mollified.

"I give very largely to social settlement work, to industrial schools, to the sort of institutions that——"

"But, in your business, I mean, Mr. Buckingham. Do you accept in the carrying on of your business affairs no responsibility for their effect upon the welfare of the individuals?"

"The lines of sound business, Mr. Rollinson, are pretty clearly defined," answered Buckingham loftily.

"If you mix charity with business, business ceases to be business. A man in my position cannot venture upon experiment of that sort. You see, Mr. Rollinson, I am a trustee of the wealth of others."

There it was—the chief Buckingham obsession—his trusteeship.

"But if you accept trusteeships, such as the one referred to here, must you not also accept the social, or, at least, the humane responsibilities which ownership of housing properties involves?"

"As a trustee, my concern is with maintaining values and dividends," replied Mr. Buckingham curtly, becoming resentful again.

"And would you not consider that whatever made men and women better, healthier, happier, more prosperous, would increase property values?"

"Yes, I would consider that—theoretically; but virtually it is too—too chimerical to be taken account of by an investment banker."

"Do you consider any series of acts which makes a murderous fanatic out of a sober citizen as too chimerical to be taken account of by a practical man like yourself?"

"Now you are coming back to the absurdities of this farce," snapped Mr. Buckingham, waving his hand, about him, and a little startled to notice that the jury was still in its box, and that, with the exception of a few officers of court intent upon their several duties, everyone was listening to the colloquy between him and Rollinson.

"Did you consider the hatred in the eyes of Jacob Aurentsky chimerical? The knife when he brandished it before you—did that seem chimerical?"

"The fact is," qualified Mr. Buckingham, "I never heard of this particular house; I am only assuming that your facts are correct, and if they are, I am responsible for them only as a trustee."

"But you object to being stabbed as a trustee?" said Rollinson sarcastically.

"Now, Rollinson," warned Buckingham loudly, "don't you attempt to bait me!"

But Victor was done with baiting. He was ready for denunciation.

"Buckingham!" he exclaimed fiercely, "listen! for God's sake, listen, and let me tell you something, with the citizens of Philadelphia looking on, something that other people have tried to tell you and you have refused to hear and have gone in your headstrong way till murder has almost come of it. If events can mean anything to a man, stand still and hear what I have to say and then go back to your office and sit down and think."

Rollinson's voice was not as loud as Buckingham's had been, but it had dignity and authority in it, and the man was tall enough to tower above the financier, who himself was very tall.

"I dare to tell you," Rollinson went on, "that wealth which rests upon social injustice and political favourit-

ism, not to say upon corruption, is insecure. Who knows how many Aurentskys are brooding their way to madness in the city of Philadelphia to-day? Who knows how soon this attitude of indifference and irresponsibility on behalf of some holders of great wealth—I say some, for Philadelphia has holders of great wealth who admit their responsibility—I say who knows how soon men like you, Buckingham, who regard neighbourliness to the workers as a chimerical duty, will have turned the heads of hundreds of thousands of industrial workers of foreign birth within our borders—men who have little education, little capacity to reason, and little experience of free government and are lacking, therefore, in that patient intelligence of the masses which makes democracies possible—who knows how long before these men shall turn into mobs and rage through our streets, destroying property values because property values have been turned into a means of extorting from them the price of life, without returning to them the means of life in any comfortable form.”

“Wild! wild, silly thoughts!” ejaculated Buckingham scornfully.

Buckingham waved his hands and tried to speak but Rollinson cut him off with this final statement:

“I ask you, Willard H. Buckingham, to cease to vaunt of the magnitude of your income, to cease to boast of the sums you give to charity, and to prate no more about faithfulness to fiduciary responsibility, so long as in the greatest responsibility of all—you have failed entirely.”

Outraged and angry beyond words, the financier turned and tried to walk away from Rollinson, who, to use a reporter's figure in describing the incident, was still erupting like a human volcano, but the crowd from without the rail had flowed inside, wedging chairs and desks about him so tightly that an exit was for the moment impossible, and the man had to stand with flushed, wrathful face while Rollinson broke into a final burst of something like eloquence with:

"Recently there has been organized here a political movement looking to the betterment of conditions in Philadelphia. A clean and noble young man has been found to lead it—hundreds, and indeed thousands, of men have given themselves up with the fervour of a crusade to this enterprise. You should have been the first and surest man to help it, because you have more at stake than any one else. Instead, you were at first indifferent, then scornful, then openly opposed to it. You have made cowards of men who would have helped in it; you have threatened with a blow in the back the men who did not withdraw their support from this great cause at your command. You have even conspired to ruin a great manufacturing institution of this city in order to ruin the leaders in this great movement.

"That was morally unjust; legally it was a crime. Why, Mr. Buckingham, were you not so big as to be regarded in this community as almost beyond the law, I might, at this moment, be suing you under the statutes for an insidious kind of business piracy that is no more honourable than the process of extortion by which Joseph Maldono robbed this inoffensive Jew of his grocery store. You have called this man Aurentsky insane and an anarchist. Mr. Buckingham, it is you who are the anarchist. It is only your many other altogether admirable qualities as a citizen and a business man that keep the knowledge of this fact from being reflected in the face of every friend who looks at you."

Rollinson had finished. The crowd sensed this instantly and began to fall back before Buckingham whose red, heated features and seething anger made his immediate proximity none too pleasant a place for any one to linger. As the banker made his way past the chair in which Jerry Archer had sat motionless during the ten minutes of this colloquy, that toward the last had become a monologue on Victor's part, Buckingham's outraged eyes seemed to pause and

scan the face of the young man keenly, as if hoping to find there some sympathetic appreciation of his position and the wrong that had been done him.

But Jerry returned his glance with no more than a look of recognition. He had been greatly disappointed in Buckingham this morning.

If only the man had softened, if only he had been horrified instead of enraged by the discovery of his relationship to the condition of the house in which little Isadore Aurentsky had died, if only he had mustered one word, one thought or expression of consideration for the man who had attempted his life. But no, the man could think to-day only of himself and of his hurt and offended pride. Therefore it was but just that Victor had said to Mr. Buckingham in public what Jerry had tried to say to him in private; but Victor, being a trained speaker, had said it so much better, more cuttingly, and with so much more smashing force than Jerry had been able to say it.

But not even Jerry had suspected that the reason Victor Rollinson had been able to speak with such feeling of the broader social consequences of a cold, stubborn indifference like Buckingham's was that the lawyer was in the secrets of the Federal investigators and knew what they knew about the anarchist Levene, knew that he was a direct associate of the leaders of the I. W. W. movement, knew that Aurentsky was not dreaming when he babbled to his daughter of the plot of widespread acts of sabotage in Philadelphia that went even to the taking of human life.

Rollinson knew, moreover, that even in these days while Jerry's campaign was pushing to its close, while Aurentsky was being tried for his murderous attack, the net of the United States Government was being drawn closer and closer about these plotters of wholesale destruction, and that there was real anxiety lest the alarm be given and the criminals escape or that some sudden throwing forward of their plans might make the wholesale arrests that were in contemplation

come after the series of crimes had been perpetrated instead of before, as the Federal agents naturally hoped.

In other words, while Philadelphia came and went about the business of the day, and while its citizens were more or less interested in the political campaign of the Real Republicans against the Machine Republicans, the city as a whole was living upon a powder mine. Rollinson did not permit Jerry to know this because he felt that anything which distracted his attention from the campaign issues was bad for the campaign itself.

With Buckingham gone, the crowd quickly melted out of Judge Boynton's court-room. Aurentsky had been taken away to jail with an officer, but not without being made to understand by Sylvy that some mighty change in his fortunes had taken place, that the law could forgive and even be merciful, and that liberty and an opportunity to rehabilitate himself were almost in his grasp. Rachel and the little Aurentskys were clamouring about Victor and thanking him volubly. Victor listened to them indulgently for a while, but soon managed to get Sylvy alone and in front of him, just for one lover look into the girl's eyes. They were swimming with tears of gratitude; but there was also admiration in them—heights of admiration and depths of love. Victor's heart leaped as he saw it—and hope, a great, rare, uplifting hope, built itself higher and stronger in his heart than ever before.

CHAPTER XLI

THE DAY OF DECISION

JERRY walked out of the court-room greatly depressed by the realization that this was Ruth's father whom Victor Rollinson, in the interest of truth and justice, had just excoriated so ruthlessly.

"Don't read the papers to-night, Ruth; nor to-morrow morning. Just don't read 'em at all," he telephoned her. "Aurensky? Oh . . . guilty, of course, but with a recommendation to mercy. Victor handled the case marvellously, and the man will probably not go to jail at all—just go out with a suspended sentence . . . Sylvy? Brave as ever, and twice as beautiful; and Victor twice as determined, I saw him turn and look at her when it was all over. Such a look! Ruth, it would make you believe in love if you knew there wasn't any such thing. . . . Yes; be out to-night; tell you all about everything."

The trial was concluded on Friday. The campaign was in its final days. Tuesday the issue would be decided. The story of the dramatic events of the trial, all of which had taken place after the prisoner was convicted, and events which were themselves surpassed in interest by the severe arraignment of Buckingham with which Rollinson had concluded his brief passage at arms with the banker, created a profound impression. For one thing, it gave the lie finally to the hypothesis that Jerry Archer could be construed as in any sort of real or prospective alliance with the projects of Buckingham. For another, it gave one final and striking instance of the effect of misgovernment upon the lives and health of a whole city.

Nor was it alone upon the minds of the humbler classes, the dwellers in tenements, that this impression was made.

"There is pestilence enough bred daily in that one alley to bring a plague to the whole city," Doctor Owenbaugh had declared in an interview with the reporters.

There was a wave of outspoken sympathy for Aurenzsky, too, and generous approval of the Judge's action with regard to sentence, while Jerry's magnanimous spirit toward the man who had stabbed him did more than anything else to drive home to the city the fact that his administration, as he had tried to tell the people of Kensington, was to be characterized by the human touch.

This was the atmosphere in which Jerry at headquarters rallied his forces on Friday night for the last two days of battle, Saturday and Monday. Even the young leader, himself, was satisfied that he had by now got the virus of his fight beneath the skin of the coldest, most stodgy of Philadelphia temperaments. Everybody knew the contest was on; everybody knew what it was about; everybody had taken sides. It was the tensest battle of give and take, blow on blow, attack upon attack that Philadelphia had ever seen in a municipal campaign.

Convinced now that votes enough were going to be cast to elect him, Jerry Legan to concern himself with getting these votes counted.

There were all sorts of rumours about false registrations, about plans for stuffing the ballot boxes, and for mutilating and disqualifying in the count the votes cast for the Real Republican candidates.

Keenly cognizant of this, and absolutely incapable of doing anything in the conventional or commonplace way, Jerry issued a call for workers that in itself fell upon the opposition like the raining of bombs from the sky upon an enemy's works.

"It will not be an easy job," ran the last paragraphs of the call. "If you are afraid don't come. They

have treated the watchers of reform roughly in the past. A few years ago a man who was fighting the gang in one of the wards was attacked in the polls itself; he defended himself with a stick of timber till the police came, and to them, officers in uniform, he surrendered. After this surrender he was maltreated indescribably and died in the hospital. A few years ago some young men from the Y. M. C. A. volunteered to serve as watchers at the polls. Some of them were beaten brutally. Other such crimes have happened. Reform workers have been insulted, threatened, arrested; they have had their window books taken from them and torn up and thrown in their faces. We may expect things like that on Tuesday, for, I tell you, the machine is desperate.

"You citizens of Philadelphia do not like to have me refer to these things. I do not like to refer to them. You tell me it shames the city before the world, and gives it a bad name. Remember, that it was not I who shamed and gave the city the bad name. It was the men who did these things in the city where it was first written and widely advertised that all men were created free and equal. My appeal to you is that brave, dauntless men surround the polls to-morrow, and make these things impossible by your presence.

"But when you come out for this, kiss your wives and mothers good-bye, for you may die as George Eppley died, before your loved ones see you again."

This sentence was melodramatic, but it was apt. It made memory connections with an incident that still burned deep in the public consciousness.

Right along in his speeches Jerry had been taking potshots at misuse of the "Assistance to Voters" clause in the election laws.

"Now I want to remind you," he was in the habit of saying, "that every voter who, not requiring it, asks for assistance perjures himself, and I warn you that the Real Republican organization has provided the necessary machinery to check every such case, and

I pledge you my word that, whether I am elected or defeated, every man who asks for assistance who does not require it will face a criminal prosecution. Some of you say, 'But I'll lose my job if I don't ask for assistance.' I say to you that you'll lose some years of your liberty if you do ask for it," and there was a snap to Jerry's chin as he jerked this sentence out that showed the whole conviction of the man was close behind the announcement of his purpose.

On Monday night Jerry made the last speech of the campaign in seven different places over the city, and each time concluded with:

"And now, voters of Philadelphia, the campaign is over. It has been fought hard. It has been necessary to do and to say some relentless things. If any man has been hurt personally by the words my tongue has spoken, I am sorry.

"To-morrow we are going to witness the miracle of democracy, the sight of men coming out from the workshop and store, writing their individual wills upon pieces of paper, and thus dictating the government of their city. We become accustomed to this sight and we see it debased often enough, but, after all, it is a sublime spectacle; it marks the most forward step in government the world has yet attained. Before that sublime spectacle all thoughts of personal issues fade away. Indeed, the dearest issues seem small, inconsequential, unimportant before the fact that the citizens have had their way and wrought their will.

"In the election now at hand I long for victory, but I shall not be crushed by defeat. I have but one hope for to-morrow that I cannot give up—it is that the voters may have their way; that, untrammelled by bosses or bribes or bludgeons, they may record the just, sober conviction of their own hearts, and to that verdict, whatever it be, whatever it means to the fortunes of Jeremiah Thomas Archer, I in advance humbly bow.

"I hope for victory, but I do not fear defeat. Good-night, my friends, good-night."

Election day itself was a day of turmoil. The machine fought as if in its last intrenchment; all the weight of superior organization, all the power of greater experience in the practical matter of getting out the vote and counting it, all the subterfuges of unscrupulous men, all the devices of accomplished tricksters, all the insolence that came of possessing the election boards, all the effrontery and brutality that resulted from having control of police and magistrates were employed. But the Real Republican workers stood up stoutly for their right, and so great was the popular feeling which its young leader's warnings had aroused that the machine dared not to go the length of former days in the employment of violence.

At 5 o'clock of election day Jerry issued his thanks and congratulations to the workers of the Real Republican organization for their faithful and effective effort in getting out the votes. "The next thing is to get them counted," he reminded. "Elections have been won and stolen in Philadelphia. Let every man whose duty it is to enter upon the long vigil of counting the ballots in his division remember that a grave responsibility rests upon him to see that this election, which I believe we have won, is not stolen from us before morning. The same courage and fidelity which were needed during the day must be exercised in double measure to-night."

The interval between the closing of the polls and the time when the count of the first precinct was complete was the most anxious hour for Jerry that he had ever known. Unable to sit still, he tore himself away from headquarters and went down to walk about, but there was no such thing as a calming stroll, for on every hand people pointed him out or crowded around to speak to him, to wish him success, or to inquire what the portents were. Secreting himself in a telephone booth he called up Ruth and invited her to go for a

ride, gaining further privacy by hiring a taxicab instead of going back to headquarters for his own automobile. Jerry was soon on the great boulevard with Ruth by his side.

It was like stepping into heaven for a moment. The short November day was drawing to its close. The sharp, cool breath of night filled his lungs and washed his blood clear of the fever of political strife. With Ruth so near him everything else moved a great way off. The city, the campaign, nothing mattered now but love and Ruth. Her hand had stolen into his, his arm was around her waist, her head was on his shoulder, and there was little conversation. Each had so many, many things to think about that speech was rather unnecessary. Life was flowing on—their lives were flowing on—the future, drifting down upon them fast, was big with the promise of the unfolding of the mystery of love. That was enough to keep them busy, and it did.

They did chatter though, after a while, and somewhere about 7:30, rested and tremendously refreshed, Jerry delivered Ruth at home for her dinner and promised faithfully that he would himself take a bite at the club before going to headquarters for the first of the returns. As he dismissed the cab on Broad Street, however, his eye caught the flicker of a light on a stereopticon sheet stretched above the low buildings across the way. A moving picture was dancing on the screen, but just then gave way to a slide which said :

“First returns, forty-eighth division, Thirty-fourth Ward: Archer, 172; Farrell, 42.

Jerry's heart leaped. This was his home division. He had made it his care to know every voter in it personally; it had given him a tremendous majority; but, as the figures still stood before his eyes, and a faint cheer rose from the gathering crowd, his spirits sobered. “To think,” he reflected, “that forty-two men in that division voted for Farrell. Who are they? Who could they be?”

Jerry passed on into his club, but the longer he thought of this the more the returns from that first division disquieted him. "If Farrell got forty-two votes, one-fourth as many as I among my own neighbours in one of the most intelligent wards in the city, what will he get in the downtown wards?" That was his reasoning as, with a cup of coffee and the most nourishing sandwich which a beefless Tuesday afforded, he sought to fortify himself against the strains of watching which the night would have in store for him.

Leaving his club, and walking up Broad Street again toward Real Republican headquarters, Jerry paused from time to time to read the returns which were beginning to appear quite regularly now upon the newspaper screens. These were the outlying sparsely populated wards of the well-to-do that counted first; and invariably they were returning Archer majorities, but these majorities were not large enough to satisfy the young man.

As he picked his way across Walnut Street, a passing patrol wagon held him up for a moment. Jerry got a glimpse of the interior of this and saw it full of men.

"Victor is gathering 'em in," he remarked to himself with grim satisfaction. "They may steal it from us, but this will be a hard fall for election thieves."

In the next block along Broad Street, two other wagonloads of men in charge of officers went by, but this time they were not patrol wagons, but open auto-trucks, with improvised seats of boards, and officers in charge were plain-clothes men. Again Jerry chuckled.

"That's Victor again," he said, and the picture of this beginning of court battles which would help to clean up all elections in the future elated the young reformer almost as much as the fair prospect of his own election. When he reached the campaign headquarters he asked about the arrests even before he inquired "Well, how's it going?"

"No arrests to-night," was reported to him. "Little fraud reported so far."

"But I saw wagonfuls going up Broad Street——"
 "Don't know anything about it. Look at these, Mr. Archer," and the secretary pushed a small sheaf of return sheets under his hand. "It's going great!"
 Jerry scanned them hastily.

"I can't see it," he said shortly, handing the sheets back.

"Why, you're leading everywhere, so far."

"So far," shrugged Jerry, pessimistically, and passed on to his desk, where he sat down and for a few minutes felt himself rather a lonely figure of a man. His forte was action. The time for action was over. There was nothing to do now but wait. The hour from 9 to 10 seemed longer than all the rest of the campaign. It was, moreover, a puzzling hour for Jerry and for everybody else at headquarters. The returns indicated strange things. His majorities fluctuated strangely. They were small where they should have been big and big where they should have been small. Jerry sat with a late edition of the *Evening Courant* on his lap.

"LANDSLIDE FOR ARCHER" its sweeping headline declared; but it was predicted on those first early returns from the residence wards.

From 8 o'clock on these returns had grown steadily less promising. About 9 it had appeared that some of these so-called better-class wards were actually voting against him—giving their majorities for Farrell. Jerry contemplated these with dismay.

"Jerry," suggested Mike Kelly, who was on hand at headquarters, "did it occur to you that you are going to get your heaviest majorities in the downtown wards—the old machine wards—some of them?"

"No," responded the candidate, with gloomy emphasis, "it didn't. I expected to cut 'em down there somewhat, but what I depend upon is these great outside districts and—and Kensington. I expect Kensington to do very well for us."

"Well, look at this." Kelly handed him the returns

from a division in the Fourth Ward, Archer 184; Farrell 92."

"What do you think of that?" laughed his friend.

Jerry walked over to a map on the wall and located the division.

"That's where I put that street through and broke up a nest of rotten tenements," he explained.

"Well," insisted Kelly, "that's just a hunch. You watch. You're going to win, old man, and you're going to win with the votes of the commonest of the common man."

Jerry's face lighted.

"I'd rather have that kind of a victory than any other. He's the only man worth fighting for. The others can take care of themselves."

Kelly went away chuckling and Jerry fell to watching his totals again. There could be no doubt his majority was slowly dwindling. At 10:15 it was no longer a majority. Farrell was leading and Broad Street outside had become a pandemonium of a fresh kind of raucous noises.

But the next computation showed the pendulum slowly swinging back, and at 10:30 Jerry was ahead again. At 10:45 his majority had increased to 2,000; at 11 o'clock it was 4,000.

Kelly came back crowing, for it was the totals beginning to come in from the industrial wards that were turning the scale.

Jerry's face lighted up. "They did believe me, didn't they?" he exclaimed. "Those fellows out there. And they couldn't be bribed nor intimidated."

"Looks good," smiled Kelly. "Looks good!"

At 11:30 o'clock the majority had climbed another fifteen hundred, and the "dopesters," the keen heads, old or young, with a nose for figures and a head for statistics, were sitting with maps before them, on which returns of other years were plotted, and estimating majorities for different sections of the city on the basis of the returns received thus far to-night. Just

before 12 o'clock these men had got their estimates combined, and one of them came rushing to Jerry.

"You win!" he exclaimed. "You will carry the city by twenty-two thousand!"

Jerry almost forgot to rejoice.

"Is that all?" he asked hollowly, realizing now that he had hoped for a very great majority, seventy-five or a hundred thousand.

But there were plenty of others to rejoice. Cheers, handclapping, and hilarious laughter broke out. The headquarter rooms were suddenly crowded as if everybody at once had discovered that victory had perched on the banners of the Real Republicans and pouring in to enjoy the triumph with the leaders.

Prominent men, who had taken an aggressive interest in the campaign, came in to offer their congratulations.

Jerry received these felicitations of his warm personal friends modestly, and slipped away to the privacy of an inner room to telephone to Ruth. To his surprise she was reported not at home.

"Out with Miss Letitia, Mr. Archer," reported the butler.

Jerry chuckled. "Out in the car watching the election returns, I'll bet a dollar," was his conjecture.

CHAPTER XLII

THE COURT OF LAST APPEAL

As JERRY returned to his desk, Victor Rollinson, who had been out of sight all evening, appeared; his tall figure threading its way through the massed humanity and clouds of tobacco smoke, his brow grave and troubled, till he caught Jerry's eyes upon him; then he smiled happily.

"You've won, handsomely!" he said, gripping his friend's hand warmly.

"We've just squeaked in," deprecated Jerry.

"No," insisted Rollinson. "It was a knockout fight and you won. But it was only a preliminary skirmish—a sort of ground-clearing action to what is ahead of us— We haven't got into the real campaign at all yet, old man. Could you slip out of here for a few minutes and let me show you something?"

"It would be a relief," declared Jerry.

The two men elbowed their way out to the elevator, and down to the street. Through crowds that hurrahed wildly for Archer, Jerry, with his hat pulled low over his eyes, hurried after Rollinson as fast as the thronged streets permitted, and within a few minutes Rollinson had led him to the marshal's room in the Federal Building, which they found crowded with newly arrested men.

"What's this?" inquired Jerry. "They said they weren't making any election arrests till to-morrow."

"This," explained Victor, "is our real job. We have been dealing through this campaign with little A B C questions. This is the big pressing problem of Phila-

delphia, of Pennsylvania, of America—the Bolsheviki of this country.”

“I don’t get you,” said Jerry. “These men don’t look like criminals. Why, why—there’s one of our workmen.”

“You’ll find three more of your workmen among the two hundred men arrested here to-night. This is the Federal round-up of a wholesale plot for sabotage, arson, possibly murder, that was to have been sprung in Philadelphia to-morrow at 9 o’clock.”

“You don’t mean it!” gasped Jerry.

“It’s the solemn truth. Sylvy got the first inkling of it from her father months ago. The day you were stabbed I started Simmons on the trail.”

“But what are our men doing in it?”

“Simmons tells me his operators found nearly a wagonload of dynamite about your Works to-night, and the search is still going on,” replied Victor.

Jerry felt suddenly weak.

“And we’ve always dealt squarely with our men, and treated them like human beings. The—the vipers!”

“Tut! tut! Don’t call ’em that,” said Victor.

“Call ’em fools, dupes, madmen, if you want to. Though these fellows are not criminals, there isn’t any crime some of them would stop at. They’ve had it pumped into ’em by agitators. They supply the sparks, and we, the employing class of America, supply the powder in the form of our blind mishandling of labour and labour situations.

“Jerry, it’s a crude kind of fight we’ve been in. A sort of rudimentary one. It was a fight that had to be made; but after all, it was only a symptom. Corrupt political machines have got to be smashed, of course. Our laws have got to be enforced, and bad ones repealed and better ones made. But, fostered by old evils, new evils have grown up. This problem of the relation between capital and labour, this question of distributing and assimilating the rewards of industry, of securing of such rights for the masses as the

classes are able to secure for themselves—that's the problem ahead of this country. And government has got to solve it."

"But how are you going to deal with it?" Jerry's speeches in the campaign showed he had thought about the subject vaguely, but now he was face to face with it in a concrete form that was at once astounding and staggering.

"As for the leaders," replied Victor bluntly, "well, I'd back 'em up against a wall and turn the firing squads loose; but as for the fellows at the bottom—their poor, misguided followers—well, I think I'd try to remove the causes that breed this sort of industrial fire-damp that explodes at the crack of a match.

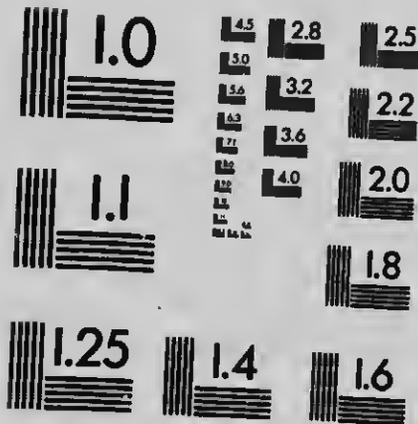
"I couldn't tell you this while the campaign was on for fear of distracting you from your job, but neither could I let you miss this object-lesson to-night. You know, Jerry, you've probably got a great future before you politically. You've shown astonishing aptitudes in this campaign. You might go to Harrisburg. You, you might even go to Washington. We send too many lawyers to Congress and not enough business executives. And so, just in the time of elation over a great victory, I wanted to temper it with a picture of these conditions. For a part of your job at the City Hall, Jerry, must be an attack upon this question of relations between the manufacturers and their employees, for that is coming to be more and more the people's business. Why, if these fellows grow as they have been growing, in ten years there won't be any constitution or any government. There'll be just the agitators, a law unto themselves."

Jerry all this while had stood silent, watching the scene as the Federal officers went on searching, booking, and cross-questioning these men, some of whom were drowsy, some defiant, some docile, some argumentative, but not one with the hangdog air or the meek sleekness of a professional criminal. They were much more like prisoners of war.



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Now Jerry had no answer and no comment. With a final survey and a sigh he turned away from the scene and the two men passed out into the freshness of the outer air.

But when the young political leader would have made for headquarters again Victor stopped him before the door of the West End Trust Building.

"Come up," he said. "I've got another little surprise for you and a good deal more pleasant than the scene you have just looked on."

"But I'm a little anxious about the later returns," hesitated Jerry.

"You can telephone from upstairs," urged Victor. "In fact, old man, this little surprise party of mine has been receiving election returns up here all night."

They were stepping into the elevator as this speech was made.

Jerry's face lost its gravity as an amused suspicion crossed his mind.

"You don't mean——?"

Victor nodded happily.

"Ruth and her Aunt Letitia, Sylvy and her mother! There's been a midnight supper waiting up there since 12 o'clock, and it's now half past."

Jerry's laugh was as happy as a boy's.

"Victor," he chuckled, slapping his friend on the back, "you are a great little planner. Have you got anything else up your sleeve, I wonder?"

Victor smiled.

"I've had a good many different kinds of things on my mind," he confessed, "these last few days."

"And on your heart, what?" observed Jerry with a wink.

Victor acknowledged this with another nod, but his smile became graver.

"Well, good luck, old man!" declared Jerry warmly. "Nobody can resist you forever," and he slapped his friend heartily on the back.

"Jerry!" cried Ruth, bounding toward him.

"You're elected! You're elected!" She flung her arms around his neck and saluted the Mayor-elect on both cheeks.

"Am I?" asked Jerry with a happy smile, but before she could answer he had planted a caress of his own where it made answering impossible.

"What are the latest returns?"

"Eighteen thousand majority!"

"But it was twenty-two when I talked to them last."

"But this is actual. What you had were estimates."

"Give me the phone," demanded Jerry, and he got headquarters at once.

"Elected beyond the possibility of a doubt," said the secretary.

"Majority cannot possibly be less than ten thousand, probably twenty."

Jerry hung up the phone.

"Yes, they say I'm elected," he said, and with an expression of doubts clearing up and of responsibilities settling on his face, as if he realized for the first time what it meant that a young man thirty-one years old should have been elected Mayor of one of the greatest cities in the world.

"I suppose, then, you have time to recognize my presence, and to acknowledge your gratitude to me for staying up all hours of the night that this young lady might be on hand to tender congratulations at the right moment of victory."

"Why, Aunt Letitia!" apologized Jerry, leaping up. "I did not see you and I forgot that you must be somewhere around."

"Never n d, boy," reassured Aunt Letitia amiably, "so happy I don't care if you don't speak to me for a week." And to demonstrate fully her state of mind, that prim and proper lady bestowed a kiss of her own upon Jerry, who, as he received it, noted tears of joy standing in Miss Minturn's eyes.

"Oh, Aunt Letitia, you're proud of him, too, aren't

you? Just as proud as I am!" and Ruth made a fairly successful attempt to hug them both at once. Her eyes were shiny also, and there was something lumpy in Jerry's throat.

"Kind of—kind of softens a fellow up," he admitted, "to step out of the turmoil of a fight like that into a quiet little secluded spot like this and find love and congratulations waiting for you, doesn't it? Hello—where's Victor?" Jerry suddenly recalled that they had entered together, and that there must be two other persons in the room to be greeted.

It required no great search to discover the lawyer standing in the alcove leading to the library, in conversation with Sylvy, and as entirely oblivious to the presence of the others as Jerry had been a moment before. He was talking in low, earnest tones, and Sylvy was listening raptly, with devotion shining in her eyes. Mrs. Aurensky was also in evidence, having shrunk shyly into a corner, where she sat with folded hands.

The woman's expression, as Jerry noted it, was a strange commingling of many emotions—gratitude, admiration, sympathy, apprehension, regret all were pictured there. This man had saved her husband from the consequences of a rash and dreadful crime, and for that she all but worshipped him; but this man also was persistently wooing her daughter—against the traditions of her religion, against the better judgment of the girl's own heart, and against the will of God! Wherefore, Rachel Aurensky indulged Victor Rollinson and was sorry for him; yet she knew that he must be disappointed, and she hoped that to-night, when they were through with celebrating the election victory, Sylvy might find a way to end Mr. Rollinson's appreciated but unpropitious suit.

"Look at 'em," said Jerry, nodding toward Victor and Sylvy, but addressing himself to Aunt Letitia and Ruth. "Wouldn't it break your heart? Here I am, getting everything I go after, and stout old Victor

doesn't get anything. I was going to make him Mayor, and here I am elected. I've won the dearest girl in all the world for a wife, and we're going to be married before inauguration day. There's Victor loving the next dearest with all of his heart and lungs and every fibre in his body, and she loving him, too, and looking it, but telling him 'No' at the same time, and looking that, too, while grand old Victor just won't take 'No' for an answer."

"Such marriages never are happy, you know, Jerry," commented Aunt Letitia. "It's like pulling teeth, of course, but they had better be sensible now than sorry long after, when two hearts are broken and a lot of things have been done that can't be undone."

"But, oh—Aunt Letitia!" sighed Ruth, "lovers can't be coldly rational. I feel so sorry for them. I want Sylvy to say 'Yes.' She wants to herself; can't you see it? There—there must be a way out without shattering a love like that, don't you think? Don't you, Aunt Letitia? Don't you think so, Jerry?"

"By George, I do!" declared Jerry fervently, and turned another admiring glance upon his friend. "To talk to him five minutes ago you'd think there wasn't a thing in the world on his mind but his duty to the country—I must tell you at supper what he's just been showing me. Then he comes in the door, sees her, and, by George, did you ever see any one so absorbed! And yet, that's like Victor. I think he'd propose to a woman in the middle of Broad Street if the opportunity came there, and he wouldn't pay a bit of attention to the traffic cop till he got his answer."

"He's getting his answer," whispered Ruth, softly, turning and looking over her shoulder. "She's telling him 'No' again."

The library door opened and the same black servant appeared who had spread a luncheon there six weeks before; but this time a partner in blackness and in profession was with him. Behind them was the library table, loaded, equipped and decked

out with all the necessaries of a hearty midnight meal.

"Supper is served, suh!" announced the chief server.

It seemed to be the first sound Victor had heard since he entered the room. Mindful, suddenly, of both his duties and his opportunities as host, he ushered them into the library.

"Miss Minturn, you do not mind an end, do you?" he inquired, as he drew back a chair for her at the end of the library table.

"Oh, no; that is frequently the position chosen for the chaperone, and usually the remoter the end the better satisfied her charges are with her position."

Victor next lured Mrs. Aurentsky to the other end, which left Jerry with Ruth within reach of his hand on one side of the table, while Victor and Sylvy took the other.

"I begin to be hungry," laughed Jerry, as his eyes surveyed the table. "I have hardly tasted food for a week, and begin to feel all those delayed appetites catching up with me at once."

"I wish I could say as much," Victor declared. "Sylvy here has my appetite in her keeping."

Sylvy blushed and turned on Victor a look of adoration and appeal. It seemed for a moment that her eyes were on the point of filling. Victor passed out a quick hand and caught hers, "I mustn't joke about that, must I?" he said and frankly gave up trying to be mirthful—for the sake of his guests, when there was such a load upon his heart.

Ruth, Jerry, and Aunt Letitia were freshly consumed with sympathy and admiration for the girl. The stronger the pressure of her love, the loftier the spiritual height she seemed to climb up to. Out of sheer compassion they tried loosing a flood of chatter.

"Upon my soul," declared Aunt Letitia, "but receiving election returns does give one an appetite, as Jerry says!"

"Admitted," said Ruth, helping herself to sandwiches.

"It's kosher!" Sylvy whispered to her mother, and that large lady, who had held herself strictly neutral as regards the food, suddenly began to attack whatever viands were nearest.

"What was that sight you were saying that Victor showed you, Jerry?" inquired Aunt Letitia, by way of getting some sort of conversational ball to rolling vigorously.

"Why, the most amazing, the most depressing sight!" said Jerry, instantly excited at the memory, and he launched into a description of the scene where the Federal officers were searching, quizzing, and cataloguing their nearly two hundred prisoners. His auditors listened agape.

"And what does it all mean?" asked Ruth, pale and deeply impressed.

"You tell 'em, Vic," pleaded Jerry. "I'm tired of making speeches and you can do it so much better anyway."

"I couldn't, Jerry—not now," pleaded Victor; and there was a kind of reproach in his eyes as he settled them for a moment on his friend Jerry.

Just then the telephone rang. Victor, excusing himself, went to answer it.

"Majority fourteen thousand, and it can't get any less than that!" he called back to Jerry.

"Fourteen thousand," repeated Jerry in tones of disappointment. "Just squeaked in and that's all."

"Why, fourteen thousand!" protested Ruth and Aunt Letitia, consolingly. "That's a splendid victory. Splendid!"

"And these I. W. W. This social revolution that's growing right under our feet here. What are little political victories when we've got a thing like that to deal with?" went on Jerry pessimistically.

Victor Rollinson, meantime, had not returned to the supper table.

"Sylvy!" he called softly. They all heard the call and understood its meaning, but with the exception of Sylvy affected not to notice.

She laid down her serviette and, with a look at her mother, arose and went out. Rachel made no effort to follow, but considerably occupied herself with those viands with which two shrewd coloured men continually heaped high her plate. Ruth, Jerry, and Aunt Letitia talked on in low earnest tones, discussing the significance of the I. W. W. movement and how far it was to be viewed as criminal and stamped out as such. All three were agreed that the actual plotters of crime were to be treated as criminals; but they were all agreed, again, that the plots were only symptoms of a disease to be sought out and treated at the roots.

"But how? How? What's the governmental remedy?" persisted Jerry.

"The problem of government doesn't seem anywhere near so simple as it sounded when those great forebears of ours gathered down at the State House here and signed the Declaration of Independence," suggested Ruth.

"They started with a false premise," declared Aunt Letitia. "All men are created free and equal," she intoned. "That isn't so. Victor Rollinson and Jacob Aurentsky are not equal. Even Victor and Jerry are not equal."

"No, Jerry is the greater man," opined Ruth archly.

Jerry pinched a cheek.

"Minx!" he accused, but his expression of gravity was resumed as he went on with: "The problem isn't so simple, Ruth is right about that; but simple or complex, we've got to work it out. We've got to develop a government and an industrial system that is somehow touched by human hands; that can make the adjustments and adaptations, the equilibriums and shock absorptions, that are necessary in order to have the weight of life bear more evenly on all shoulders and

bring a larger share of the rewards and joys of civilization into the homes of the workers for wages."

"Listen!" interrupted Aunt Letitia, with a nod toward the larger room.

The voices outside had grown louder, and it wasn't exactly eavesdropping that the group at the table sat hushed and overhearing every word. It was sympathy! Even Rachel stopped her munching and listened, also with sympathy. Victor was pleading more and more insistently.

"But I tell you, Sylvy," he burst out at last, "that love is bigger than religion—bigger than race—bigger even than G—no, I won't say anything blasphemous—but it's the biggest thing I know. Oh, Sylvy, Sylvy! Come to me!"

There was no denying the plea in that tone, no resisting it. The little group about the table could not see what was happening outside, but they knew—they knew that Victor stood with arms outstretched pleading, and that Sylvy stood a little way off with heaven-bosom, with welling eyes, resisting, resisting, and yet yielding—for no one who loved could have resisted that voice long. Abruptly there was a change, the creak of a hasty step, followed by a sound of sobbing, and they knew as well as if they saw that Sylvy had thrown herself into Victor's arms. And knowing this, they sat motionless, Jerry and Aunt Letitia turning instinctively to the face of Rachel Aurentsky. Lifting her eyes as if in prayer, her large features stricken with a deadly pallor, the mother arose and started for the door, but Sylvy's voice, washed clearer than usual by tears, met her on the way.

"Oh, I cannot go away from you, Victor," she was saying. "God! dear God! Show us the way out and we will go, but let us go together." The humility, the tender pathos of that plea, if made to a human God, must have been irresistible. But the speech was followed by a gasp of dismay that was in itself a note of pain and indicated that Sylvy had been confronted by

her mother. That note of pain brought the sympathetic Ruth to her feet and, with sisterly impulsiveness she advanced to where, over the mother's shoulder, she saw a tragedy playing itself out on the face of the girl. For Sylvy, in her mother's eyes, was seeing five thousand years of the most tenacious of race traditions reeling themselves out before her. There, in that forbidding frown, stood generation after generation of her ancestors, calling her the most detested name in the Hebrew language "apostate." And the word was on her mother's lips now. She—even she—was about to hurl it.

Sylvy lifted a hand to her ear as if she would shut out the hateful sound, and she turned her face away also; but a vision pursued her—a vision of her mother coming into a room filled with Rollinson's relatives and seating herself at table with them. The thing was impossible! Like a flash she saw once more that the whole project was impossible, mad, insane—promising nothing but bitterness and sorrow. With a half-suppressed sob, she reached out one appealing hand toward her mother and that stern face softened instantly to an expression of encouragement and parental pride, as if she were saying: "Courage, daughter, courage! This is the chance to show what blood is in you."

For a moment Sylvy stood, wiping her eyes and trying to calm herself, then turned a white face of entreaty toward her lover.

"Victor," she said tremulously, "I was right in the first place. Oil and water, your people and mine, cannot mix. My mother, God bless her, is fit to sit at the table of a king, but how would she feel at yours? Can't you see it is impossible? I love you, God knows, but I love my people, too, and they need me; I cannot desert them. If mother had not been here, I might have forgotten, and made both of us miserable, but now I know I cannot marry you, Victor. In my heart, I will be your bride—I can never marry another—but in reality it cannot be. Please be good to me, Victor, and

let me go. God bless you! Do big things in the world for both our sakes. Kiss me!"

The girl came forward and offered her slender self to the big man. He took her into his arms slowly and reverently, then drew her up very, very close, his great, deep-seeing eyes drinking in every detail of her face as he lifted it toward his and after a long, long moment planted upon the pitiful, beseeching lips a kiss that was as soft, as tender, and consoling as heart-broken love could make it. Then he let her go and stood like a frozen man while Rachel Aurenstky, throwing one corner of the shawl which perpetually hooded her head over the shoulders of her daughter, led the girl from the room weeping silently and so engrossed in her own sorrow that she forgot a word of good-bye to her friends.

But they were in a mood to forgive her. Ruth, humbled and mystified by this incomprehensible devotion of a daughter to a race that was greater than her devotion to herself, turned back to cross the threshold and was surprised to find Jerry and Aunt Letitia standing breathless and sympathetic beside her.

Victor, meanwhile, moved across the larger room and stood staring out into darkness. Jerry instantly made his way to him and, not venturing on speech, laid a brotherly hand upon his shoulder. Victor, after a receptive interval, shrugged the hand off.

"She was right," he said gravely. "That's why I let her go."

"You are a big man, Vic, old fellow," comforted Jerry, "bigger even than I thought. And the time needs big men. You'll have to throw yourself into things now—things that make you forget."

"No," declared Victor, turning suddenly, "I don't want to forget. So long as I live, Jerry, the picture of that girl giving up her immediate personal happiness for the sake of her duty, will remain and be an inspiration to me."

"It's a message to me, too," affirmed Jerry.

"It's a message to all America," echoed Ruth thinking of the grave symptoms they had been discussing half an hour before. "Duty before ease there will presently be no ease."

"You are right, Ruth," said Victor solemnly. And even Aunt Letitia nodded.

THE END

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