

MR. HENRY PECK AND HIS FAMILY AFFAIRS

By Gross



HIS RISE TO POWER

Continued from page 3

CHAPTER XXI. The Price.

THE next day John's office was besieged by a stream of neighbors, calling with a new born diffidence to say in person what they had said in mass the evening before. No one doubted that he would receive an enormous majority. It was not until the middle of the afternoon that Haig found him alone. "Well, Cato," he grinned, "they tell me they're a little exercised down Carthage way."

John smiled faintly. "Not much, I suspect. I've been thinking of Cato. I'm not even a relative. Poor Jerry Brent!"

"Great guns! You can think of him? Guess you haven't read his interview."

"Yes, I have."

They alluded to Brent's comment on the convention, in which he made numerous sarcastic references to the "lofty souled uplifter who had sold out to the gang for an office."

"It's the cry of a bitterly disappointed man. Brent's chance of a lifetime is gone. He knows he can't beat you, and he's sore. I wouldn't mind it."

"I don't. I'm sorry for him. He could have beaten Sherrod. I really believe."

"Look here, old man! I think I understand how you're feeling over this. You're not very happy because you think it isn't your victory—that you have it only by blackmailing a man you dislike?"

"I don't dislike Murchell—personally."

"At least you don't approve of him politically. Down at the bottom of your heart you're a little peevish because a bit of trickery has got what your theory of fighting wouldn't win. And you feel that in sacrificing, for merely personal considerations, what you conceive to be a duty to the general scheme of things you have been weak. Well, you're right. You have been weak. And I'm glad of it. It will help you to understand that no cold, abstract ideal of duty that ignores the primitive selfish instincts in men can attract, much less impel, them. The truly good inspires no sympathy. The point of this matter is, out of your weakness has come nothing but good. The bank will eventually become a sound institution, and you—I suppose you'll admit that you'll make a better governor than Sherrod or Brent?"

"I hope so. But that has come about only through an accident over which I have had no control."

"Remember another thing," Haig continued. "Three weeks ago this county cast you aside. Now it is yelling its fool head off for you. The American people worship the great god Success. Keep successful. You've been promoted from a lofty souled uplifter to a practical politician for the glory of God. Accept the promotion." He was relieved to note that John could laugh. "And here," he grinned, "endeth the reading of my last lesson. It's one thing to share my vast store of wisdom with John Dunmeade, the visionary reformer, and quite another to lecture the next governor. Funny thing what a difference a prospective office makes in one's attitude toward a man."

John smiled absently. He was thinking.

"Halg," he said abruptly, "I suppose I'm an obstinate prig. But, honestly, I'd give all I hope to possess to be able to answer you. If only they'd renominate me as district attorney! I'd earned that. Or if I could believe that the present hullabaloo were not artificially manufactured!"

Even while he spoke footsteps sounded in the outer office, and there was a knock. John opened the door to admit—Murchell.

"Good afternoon!" was the latter's unsmiling greeting.

"Won't you come in and sit down?" Murchell accepted the invitation. There was a moment of uncertainty. Then Haig reached for his hat.

"You needn't go on my account," Murchell answered the move. "In fact, I'd like you to stay."

Haig resumed his seat. He and John kept the silence of surprise.

But the senator recognized no occasion for constraint.

"I see," he said, glancing around. "You keep the old office just the same. I remember when your grandfather

built it. He was a man who accomplished things."

"And I am not. Is that your point?" "Have you the right to be bitter?" Murchell asked quietly. "When a man still young has in six years so impressed himself and his ideals on 7,000,000 people that they demand him for governor, and demand with an enthusiasm I have rarely seen?"

"Manufactured by you?"

"Stimulated," Murchell corrected briefly and continued. "And through him are beginning to realize, even vaguely, their political responsibility, he has something to his credit, I think. A good many men who think well of themselves reach old age without accomplishing so much. There are two ways of serving a reform. One is as the preacher, the dreamer. He is useful because he points out the way we shall go. The other is as the constructive leader, the man who takes the forces he finds ready to hand and uses their power to change conditions as the people are prepared for change."

"You," he turned to John, "have got to decide now which you will be. You are going to hold a great office. Public office—I think you've found this out already—isn't as simple as it seems to those who haven't held it. The man who would fill it with unflinching wisdom and justice, with exactness—and still be useful—must be as stern and unyielding as the forces of nature, and as strong."

"And I am not that." But the bitterness was lacking now.

"No man is," Murchell said gently. "I've got you the nomination through methods you won't consider clean. I've made promises you won't like, but that you must keep, or we'll both be destroyed politically."

Without excusing or concealing a single maneuver he narrated the story of the campaign and the convention.

The shuffling of feet in the outer room gave John the excuse to leave. He was heard dismissing the visitor. But many minutes flew by before he returned.

It was little enough time for what he had to decide.

A marvel had been wrought. To Murchell had been given a new purpose. But Murchell, the workman, could never change; he was too old. His lack of respect for the people and popular impulse, the habit of judging means by the end, fixed through a lifetime, would persist. And he was the stronger man, his greater genius. The instinct for mastery must be served. Who joined him did so as a follower, to be dominated by the leader's ideal and philosophy.

"If only I could answer him!" John cried within himself.

But his experience, silencing inspiration, had not taught him that answer.

There was but one way for him to decide. The trap of circumstance, sprung by his own weakness, held him fast. Having accepted advancement at the hands of that which he believed to be wrong, he might no longer openly fight against it. As an enemy to the machine, whose beneficiary he had become, he would be discredited, unconvincing. His only hope for usefulness lay in the proffered alliance, in Murchell's new purpose.

For a little Haig sat in the unwanted silence of embarrassment. Then he said abruptly:

"Senator Murchell, I'd like to apologize if you will let me."

"For telling the truth? It isn't necessary."

"No, for believing my impertinent, theatrical intervention responsible for your action."

"You don't believe that now?"

"I do not. And"—Halg hesitated in the masculine awkwardness before sentiment. "And I know Dunmeade can trust your offer."

Soon John returned. He held out his hand to William Murchell.

"I haven't the right to refuse."

"He was no longer a voice. He had passed from the wilderness to the haunts of men, where action, not preachments—achievements, not prophecy—are the currency of life.

Was he weak, the theory of life and growth he accepted wrong? To this day John Dunmeade often asks the question. Sometimes he doubts. But then, looking back over what has been done and foreseeing a fuller triumph, he puts away the question. For the compact, that day struck, held. Under Murchell's tutelage he learned to compromise, to substitute craft and in-

trigue for the honorable, open methods he loved. But he has never lost sight of his purpose and, though there have been halts and detours and even retreats, the general direction has been forward. When his time came William Murchell died, not greatly honored by a cynical world that looked for no good thing from Nazareth, but content in the belief that the forces by him set in motion would in the end undo his evil. As for Dunmeade, he is still a compromiser, but still fighting, an able lieutenant in a new movement whose end is not yet. He is glad to believe that upon his foundation other men shall be able to build with clean hands.

And he found one source of happiness over which no cloud has hovered.

When Murchell and Haig left him that afternoon, to escape kindly intruders he went out into the country. He walked for two miles or more and then, turning, went swiftly homeward.

But as he skirted the foot of the knob he was brought to an abrupt halt. For there, tethered to a bush, stood a horse that he recognized—Cruader, less fiery than of yore, but sleek as ever and with many a fast gallop left in his sturdy muscles.

For a moment John looked, hesitant, at the path up which she doubtless had climbed. Then in sudden resolution he went up.

She was standing by the big bowlder looking away at the hills that rose, rank upon rank, until the last, become mountains, were lost in the blue haze. But he saw not the hills, only her, the strong, supple figure lined against the sky, her hair red gold under the slanting sunshine. He caught his breath at sight of her, sense of all else obliterated.

She seemed to feel his nearness and turned. For an instant, without greeting, they looked at each other, these two whose romance was almost as old as life itself. But to them it was unique, all their own. To him the love had been one ardor that had not burned out in the years of failure. To her it had been a growing thing that could not be killed, reaching out its tendrils until it possessed her wholly, casting out vanity and fear, making

it fine. I didn't know time could pass so quickly and happily. Only my task was very simple and unimportant, I fear, helping father straighten out some of his papers. This morning, you know, he turned the bank over to the new cashier, and tomorrow he becomes manager of the coal company. Our affairs are all settled. The ridge house is sold and next week we move into the old one. We are to live here always. It seems like coming home.

"See?" she went on breathlessly, as though to hold back the flood of words that she knew was gathering on his lips. She held up a hand, two pink fingertips of which were sadly ink stained. "My badge of honor! It isn't very tidy, is it? But then I had to hurry into my riding things. We workers haven't time to make elaborate toilets, you aren't listening?"

"Katherine!"

And she who, unasked, had twice dared to avow her love now trembled violently before that of which she was not afraid. While she was looking at the hills before he came she had been doubting—a last faint doubt raised by words of his own. But his coming had banished that. She held her eyes bravely to his.

"That Sunday I said you couldn't love a man who had been weak, even for your sake. It isn't true, is it?" His voice was hoarse with anxiety.

"Are you sure you want me in spite?"

"In spite of everything I want you above all things else."

"Ah! no. It can't—it mustn't—be that. You are not your own. And I can be content with much less than first place."

He would have taken her in his arms, but she held him off, even while quivering with the longing to be caught, as once before he had held her, in a rough, close embrace.

"Are you sure I'd not be a drag, a continual reminder of something you'd rather forget? And that I could help you?—I'd have to help!"

"Once I wanted you—now I need you. I have just been asking, have I gone down hill? I do not know. But if I have, I need you who can understand!"

Then she knew for a certainty that the doubt was gone forever. With love's keen perception she saw that already from him had gone a little of that fine beauty and courage of manhood which had been before her during the years of separation, but which the dreamer must lose to become a "practical man." But her love rose strongest when the need of it was greatest. In quick desire to shield his loss from him she stretched forth her hands to meet his.

"Ah! I will always understand. I do not believe you have gone down. But—if you have—let us go back up hill—together!"



He saw not the hills, only her.

her through weakness and strength, in victory and defeat. Shaken, they looked away quickly; on the face of each had been written what the other most desired to see.

She waited for him to speak, but the tongue that had held thousands silent under its spell stubbornly refused to be eloquent at this supreme moment.

"I saw Crusader," he said lamely, "and I came up."

"Obviously!" She laughed nervously. "I came up here because it is the highest point in the county; but, of course, you know that, and you can see so far. It gives one a faint idea of the immensity of things and of one's own insignificance. It is very good for the soul, I assure you. I needed it, feeling so important because I had been working!"

"Working?"

"Does the notion seem so absurd?" She tossed her head girlishly. "I think

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prayed for in the complaint to-wit: For a decree dissolving bonds of matrimony now existing between the plaintiff and defendant above named, and that she awarded the custody of the Prowse and John Prowse, children mentioned and described in the complaint herein, and for such relief as to the Court may seem and equitable in the premises.

This summons is served upon you by publication by order of the honorable G. Springer, Judge of County Court of Crook County, made December 2, 1913, said order it was directed that this Summons be published in the Redmond Spokesman, a weekly newspaper published at Redmond, Oregon once each successive week for consecutive weeks, and the date of the first publication thereof was December 4, 1913, the date named said order for the first publication.

DENTON G. BURDICK, Attorney for Plaintiff, Redmond, Oregon.

First publication Dec. 4—Jan. 1.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF SALE

By virtue of an execution in closure duly issued by the clerk of the Circuit Court of the county of Crook, state of Oregon, dated the 10th day of December, 1913, in certain action in the Circuit Court for said county and state, where Guy E. Dobson as plaintiff recovered judgment against Freda Barkley, C. Sanford and J. H. Barkley for the sum of Two Hundred Dollars and costs and disbursements taxed seventy-eight and 80-100 Dollars, the 5th day of December, 1913.

Notice is hereby given that on the 17th day of January, 1914, at the north front door of the court house in Prineville, in Crook county, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of said day, sell at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, the following described property, to-wit: The Southwest One-fourth of Section Nine, in Township 13, South of Range 13, East of the Williams Meridian, in Crook county, Oregon, and I have taken and leveled upon the property of the said Freda Barkley, A. C. Sanford and J. H. Barkley, the said defendants, and I will sell the same, or so much thereof as may be necessary to satisfy the said judgment in favor of Guy E. Dobson against said Freda Barkley, A. C. Sanford and J. H. Barkley, with interest thereon, together with all costs and disbursements that may have or may accrue.

FRANK ELKINS, Sheriff.

By W. E. Van Allen, Deputy, Dated at Prineville, Oregon, December 10, 1913.

First publication Dec. 18—Jan. 11.

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NOTICE OF CONTEST

Department of the Interior, U. S. Land Office, The Dalles, Oregon, January 3, 1914.

To Laurel L. Nicolai, of Sunnyside, Wash., Contestee:

You are hereby notified that James Wilson Woods, who gives Cline Falls, Oregon, as his postoffice address, did on December 6, 1913, file in this office his duly corroborated application to contest and secure the cancellation of your homestead entry Serial No. 05474, made Sept. 12, 1911, for SW 1/4 SW 1/4 Sec. 1; SE 1/4 NE 1/4 Sec. 11 and W 1/4 NW 1/4 Sec. 12, Tp. 15 S. R. 11 E. W. Meridian, and as grounds for his contest he alleges that said Laurel L. Nicolai has failed to establish his residence on said tract; that he has failed to cultivate said tract or any part thereof; that said entryman has abandoned said tract for upward of six months last past and that such failure and abandonment was not due to his employment in the army, navy or marine corps of the United States in time of war or otherwise.

You are, therefore, further notified that the said allegations will be taken by this office as having been confessed by you, and your said entry will be canceled thereunder without your further right to be heard therein, either before this office or on appeal, if you fail to file in this office within twenty days after the fourth publication of this notice, as shown below, your answer, under oath, specifically meeting and responding to these allegations of contest, or if you fail within that time to file in this office due proof that you have served a copy of your answer on the said contestant either in person or by registered mail. If this service is