

# The MAN of the HOUR

### CHAPTER III.

**H**ORRIGAN was first to break the tense silence.

"What's this here for?" he growled, indicating Phelan with a contemptuous jerk of the head and addressing no one in particular.

"Ask your friend Wainwright," granted Phelan, with equal roughness. "—you see," began Wainwright conciliatingly, "I didn't like to see two such first rate chaps at odds with each other, so I wanted to bring you together here to—"

"Oh, you did, did you?" sneered Horrigan. "And what did Phelan say to that little plan?"

"I said," snapped Phelan before his heat could reply—"I said I'd see you in—"

"Same here, twice over!" said Horrigan.

"But," interposed Wainwright coaxingly, "is there no way?"

"No," retorted Horrigan, his deep voice rumbling far down in his throat. "There isn't. Look here, Phelan! I'm out for your scalp, and I'm going to get it!"

"Come on, look for it!" crowed Phelan, fairly hopping up and down in rage and excitement. "Come a-runnin'! An' while you're huntin' my scalp don't overlook one bet. I'm after yours!"

"Mine, you little shrimpl! Why?" "Yes, yours, Horrigan, you cur. You're pretty chesty an' strong standin' on the top of the organization, but you're no bloomin' statue of Liberty. You can be torn down, and here's the man who's got to do the tearin'." Me—Alderman Jimmy Phelan of the Eighth!

"Let it go at that for now. You'll wake up in the fall, when the election—"

"Let it go at that for keeps. I"—

"Mr. Wainwright," broke off Horrigan, "if this was the business you wanted to talk over with me here"—

"It isn't," assured the thoroughly uncomfortable financier.

"Oh! Then we can get down to real business perhaps when this fellow's gone." "That lets me out," observed Phelan cheerfully as he picked up his hat. "G'by, Mr. Wainwright. G'by, Mr. Gibbs. Horrigan, I'll"—

"But you'll stay to lunch, alderman, won't you?" urged Horrigan, with an effort at cordiality that deceived no one.

"No, thanks," replied Phelan. "When the curtain's down and the orchestra's gone home I don't need no usher to poke me in the ribs to tell me the show's out. As for stayin' to break bread with Dick Horrigan, I'd sooner have a jolly little grub fest with Wiley's poison squad. Goodby, all. Horrigan, as for you, some day I'll cross two sticks of dynamite under you and you'll scatter so wide that the inquest over your p'ltical remains will have to be held in fourteen counties."

"I am so sorry, Mr. Horrigan, that this should have happened in my house," said Wainwright as the irate alderman stalked out, leaving the boss staring after him in dumb fury. "I meant it for the best and"—

"Mr. Wainwright," interrupted Horrigan, venting his pent-up wrath on his dismayed host, "this old world of ours is white with bones of failures, of fools, of deadbeats. In other words, of folks who 'meant it for the best.' Now let's get down to business."

"First let me introduce Mr. Gibbs. He"—

"Glad to meet him, but he'll excuse me when I say I never talk business when there's a third party around. No offense, Mr. Gibbs. Just walk out and take a look at the view, like a good boy, won't you? Thanks."

Gibbs, at a warning look of appeal from Wainwright, checked the angry retort that sprang to his lips, turned on his heel and walked out. Horrigan, who had observed the glance exchanged between the two men, grudgingly attempted to soften the effect of his brusqueness.

"I didn't mean to snub your friend," said he, "but Phelan riled me, and I took it out on the next man I spoke to. What on earth set you to having Phelan here to meet me for, anyway?"

"Just as I said. I wanted to win him over to us. We will need every strong man we can get this fall. We"—

"You know a lot about finance, Mr. Wainwright. But you're a rank outsider in politics or you'd never have made such a break. I can't compromise with Phelan even if I wanted to. He's stood out against me, and I've got to smash him. If he could defy me and get away with it, other leaders would think they could do it, too, and in less than no time the organization would be split up into a dozen factions, and I'd be down and out. Understand? I've got to look out for discipline if I'm to hold the place I've won. When a man in the organization starts a fight against me, I must down him. There's no turning back. That's why I'm boss. Every man in the crowd knows he's got to obey me or fight me and that if it's a fight it's a battle to the death. And he's the man who does the dying, not I. Now, you understand? So we can get to business. What?"

But business seemed this morning fated to many interruptions. The latest came in the form of Judge Newman, who, bustling into the room with all his customary pompous dignity, suddenly stopped in his tracks and wiled at sight of the boss.

"Good morning, Mr. Horrigan," said the judge ingratiatingly, wriggling under the boss' glower. "I hope I'm not here too early and that Mr. Wainwright has interceded for"—

"For your remuneration?" queried Horrigan, speaking as though to a disgraced servant. "If that's what you're here for you might have spared yourself the trouble. What I told you before still goes."

"But, Mr. Horrigan, consider how long I've been on the bench, and"—

"And it's time you got your nose out of the feed bag and gave some one else a chance. You are"—

"I'm growing old, Mr. Horrigan!" pleaded the thoroughly cowed judge.

"How can I go back to law practice and compete with younger men? Besides, Mrs. Newman declares"—

"I can't help that," returned Horrigan, quite unmoved. "You've had your share. We've got to look out for our own active workers—for the men we can count on to do the right thing."

"But, Mr. Horrigan," protested the judge, "I always try to do what is right."

"I said 'the right thing,'" corrected the boss. "See the difference?"

"Excuse me, judge," intervened Wainwright. "If you'll leave this matter in my hands, I will try to convince Mr. Horrigan of your fitness. Just leave it all to me."

"Oh, thank you so much, Charles!" cried the relieved judge. "I'm sure I can count on you. Mrs. Newman will be so grateful. Well, I won't detain you any longer. Goodby."

"Goodby, Judge," answered Wainwright tolerantly.

"Goodby, Mr. Horrigan," went on Judge Newman, with effusion.

A grant from Horrigan, who had turned his broad back on the visitor, was the only reply, and the judge departed to bear the message of hope to Mrs. Newman.

"Have you any special objections to Newman?" asked Wainwright.

"No," said Horrigan, "except I think perhaps there's a man who can do better by us. You know how much it means sometimes to have the right judge handle your case."

"I think at a pinch we can manage Newman, and"—

"Oh, if it is a favor to you, all right. But it doesn't do those judiciary fellows any harm to keep them guessing awhile. It tames 'em and teaches 'em to mind—sort of keeps them in their places, you know. And now won't you tell that butler of yours not to let us be disturbed?"

Wainwright complied, and the two settled down to their deferred talk.

"How about the election this fall?" began the financier.

"We're already growing; but, just between you and me, it's going to be a hot fight. The people at large seem to be a little sore on the organization. A few deals lately have been a little raw, and some of the papers are kicking. Good Lord! If it wasn't for the newspapers what a cinch a boss would have in running a city! It'd be like taking pennies from a baby's bank. But"—

"Then you think there is some doubt about the election?"

"I wouldn't go so far as that. It'll be a tussle, but with plenty of cash and the right man for mayor—mark me, I say—and the right man—we ought to win."

"The woods are full of 'right men,'" replied Wainwright. "The money is the chief thing to consider. That is why I asked you here today. This is the point I'm getting at: As soon as election is safely over the Borough Street railway will apply for a franchise for a car line from Blank avenue to Dash street along the river front."

"I see!" nodded Horrigan. "And, as you own the City Surface line and as that is the Borough Street railway's worst rival, you want the Borough's franchise bill killed when it comes before the board of aldermen."

"You're wrong. To paraphrase your own words, you know a lot about politics. I want the Borough Street rail-

way's franchise granted, and I want the franchise to be perpetual."

"But I don't see what your driving at. If you intend to merge the Borough Street railway with your own City Surface line its charter will become void."

"I don't mean to merge them. I own both roads, and I run them separately."

"The — you do?"

"That's a little surprise, eh? I haven't made any parade of it. I just went quietly to work, through Gibbs, and bought up a majority of the Borough stock. Now don't you see how the granting of the franchise and the news that I control the road will work when they are made known?"

"Sure! I'll send that stock sky high. You'll scoop in a million or two."

"A million or two!" echoed Wainwright scornfully. "Nearer"—

"Hold on!" interrupted Horrigan.

He had jumped to his feet with an alacrity that was surprising in so large a man and was listening intently.

"That clicking?" asked Wainwright.

"Oh, that's only the private wire in my office."

"Private wire? Any operator?"

"Of course. Why?"

"Suppose he should happen to be listening to us?"

"Who? Thompson? Absurd!"

"I don't know. I'd rather"—

"Nonsense. It's Thompson, my private secretary, a man who's been with me nine years. I trust him as"—

"But I don't. I don't trust anybody. Send him into some other room."

"I can't. In his absence some important message might come, and if he wasn't there on the very moment to transmit it to me I might lose thousands. He's all right if ever a man was. I trust him implicitly."

"Oh, all right, then. Go on with what you were saying."

"I want the Borough Street railway franchise made perpetual. Catch my drift?"

"Sure. But the papers and the property holders will make a big kick."

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

"That fellow was listening to every word we said!" shouted the boss as the door shut behind Thompson.

"How foolish you are!" protested Wainwright. "He was bringing me this message. I've tried and tempted and tested Thompson in a hundred ways, and he's always rung true. I trust him utterly."

"Well, I don't trust a man living," retorted Horrigan, reluctantly convinced. "I don't sign receipts or keep accounts or write letters or have witnesses when I talk. I always make it a question of veracity between me and the other man if there's an investigation. My word's as good as any one's, and they can't prove anything against me in case of a showdown. I advise you to try the same plan. It's a good one. And in the meantime if I were you I'd keep an eye on that secretary. He'll bear watching."

"Never mind about Thompson. He's all right. Let's get back to the election. Who have you in mind for mayor?"

"Well," considered Horrigan, "he's got to be some one who isn't mixed up in politics or corporations. Some one the public isn't on to. A man with no queer past."

"I advise you to consult the calendar of saints and pick out your candidate there," sneered Wainwright, who could not clearly follow his guest's reasoning.

"No. I think I can find him on earth," laughed Horrigan. "He's got to be young, clever, educated, with a good name, a good family and social standing and plenty of cash. The cash is important, so the public will understand he isn't a graft hunter. They've got to be made to think he's in the game for purity of politics and high principles and love of civic duty and all that sort of thing. At the same time he's got to be some one we can handle to suit ourselves. That's the man who'll catch 'em coming and going. We've got to find him. Any suggestions?"

"Well, how about Gibbs?"

"Won't do. Broker and money juggler. The public wouldn't stand for him."

"Young Sawyer?"

"Sawyer was born foolish, and he's been getting steadily sillier every year since, and his face shows it."

"Ten Broeck, then?"

"Ten Broeck is too fond of turning a cigarette into the connecting link between fire and a fool. And, besides, he wears a monocle. What'd happen if he was to flash 'dat monocle in a Fourth ward meeting? There'd be a massacre."

"Well, who, then? Have you any one in mind?"

"Yes," assented Horrigan. "I have. Do you happen to know a young fellow who spends his summers near here—a chap named Bennett—Alwyn Bennett?"

"Certainly; I know him well. But"—

"Well, how does he strike you?"

"I'd never have thought of him in such a connection."

"Why wouldn't you? He pretty near fulfills all our qualifications. Besides, his father used to be a big man in the organization. Got some fat contracts from it in his time too."

"But young Bennett has never"—

"He's well ed. well educated, clever, and all that. I ran across him last fall when he came over to help Lorimer in his fight in the Fourteenth. He made some rattling good speeches, and the boys all took a liking to him. A swell, but not a snob; good mixer, good fellow, popular, clear headed, no past—yes, he's our man. More I think it over the surer I am."

"I shouldn't wonder if you're right. How would you like to talk it over with him now?"

"Now?"

"Yes. He's still around the place somewhere, I think."

Wainwright rang a bell, and the butler appeared.

"Find Mr. Bennett," said the financier, "and ask him if he will step here for a moment."

"Yes," went on Horrigan reflectively,

rubbing his huge plump hands together, "he's the man for us—that is," he added, with less assurance, "if we can handle him."

"I think we can," answered Wainwright, a fragment of his conversation with Gibbs flashing across his memory. "You see, I have fairly good reasons for believing he's in love with my niece, Miss Dallas Wainwright."

"So? That's"—

"And, as I control her fortune and her brother's until Perry is twenty-five"—

"Oh, it's a cinch!" chuckled Horrigan. "He"—

"Mr. Bennett is playing tennis," reported the butler, coming to the door. "He will be here at once."

"Now," resumed Horrigan, "the only thing that remains is to find out if he'll consent, and then"—

"You wanted me, Mr. Wainwright?" asked Bennett, stepping through the long window from the veranda. "Oh, good morning, Mr. Horrigan," he added on seeing the second occupant of the room.

The young man was careless and collarless, his silk shirt being turned in at the neck. In one hand he swung a tennis racket. With the other he mopped his flushed face, for the day was hot and the game had been swift.

"Yes," answered Wainwright. "I'm sorry to interrupt your tennis set, but we want to see you on a rather important matter. We've been talking about you."

"Thanks!" said Bennett, with a puzzled smile from one to the other of the two older men. "What about?"

"Want to be mayor?" queried Horrigan abruptly.

"What's the answer?" countered the perplexed youth.

"It isn't a joke," intervened Wainwright. "Mr. Horrigan is in earnest."

"In earnest? I hope the heat hasn't gone to his head."

"You don't understand," put in Horrigan. "I control the party's nominations. The nomination for mayor is yours if you'll like it."

"Not—not really?" gasped Alwyn agast.

"Yes, really. We"—

"But, with a whole organization full of good material, why do you come to me?"

"Because you're the man we want."

"As an answer that's excellent, but as an explanation it's mystifying."

"I'll tell you. We're looking forward to a risky fight and"—

"And since you see no chance of winning you pick me out as the victim instead of some organization man? Good idea as far as you're concerned, but I beg to decline, without thanks."

"No, no!" corrected Wainwright. "Mr. Horrigan thinks that you have a strong chance of winning."

"That's right," corroborated the boss. "It'll be a hard fight, but with the right man we'll win, and we believe you're the right man. Even if you lose, you'll show the world what you're made of. Folks admire a fighter. They haven't much use for an idler."

The coarsely spoken words brought back with a rush Dallas Wainwright's plea and his own yearning to do something to make her proud of him—to win her by great deeds—to prove his

love worth her acceptance. Was this the chance—the chance he had so eagerly longed for? It seemed providential. His face alight with the joy of battle and the hope of his heart's reward, Bennett turned upon the waiting boss.

"I accept."

"Good!" yelled Horrigan, slapping him resoundingly on the back. "Good boy! Now, we'll"—

"But remember one thing, Mr. Horrigan," interrupted Bennett, and his careless boyhood seemed to have fallen away from him like a discarded garment, leaving the manhood and rugged strength stripped of all the follies and idleness that had hitherto masked it, "remember one thing, if I win this fight—if I am elected mayor—I shall never once swerve from my solemn oath of office. I"—

Wainwright, uneasy at the candidate's unwonted words and manner, started to speak, but Horrigan deftly interjected:

"Of course you'll keep your oath of office," he bellowed jovially. "Of course you will. That's understood."

Then in an undertone to Wainwright as Alwyn moved away the boss whispered:

"Don't butt in! Leave him to me! That silly reform talk don't mean anything. It's the way all youngsters in politics blow off steam. Leave him to me!"

To be continued.

This Busy Age.

"This is a busy age, sure enough," said a man who prides himself on keeping in touch with old friends. "We get new proofs of it every day. Not only do we find that we ourselves have less and less time to devote to this, that and the other thing, but we have it brought in upon us that everybody is pretty much in the same fix."

"The other morning I had a letter from a chap whom I know pretty well. I say it was a letter. It was and it wasn't, and in that contradiction lies the point of my remark. A bit of good fortune had happened to him. He had been given a position that counted for a lot, and his home paper had printed an item about it. Wanting to tell me of his luck, he had clipped the item from the sheet, pasted it on a piece of paper and forwarded it to me with his initials scrawled across the bottom. Five years ago he would have sat down and written me. Now he uses shears and paste. Oh, it's all right. I got the information, and that's the main thing. But we're all pretty busy, aren't we?" he concluded.—New York Press.

When Turkeys Are Angry.

In countries where flocks of turkeys are raised one can learn very quickly from their gobblings when they have captured a hare. If they meet him standing still or lying down they form in a circle around him and putting their heads down, repeat their peculiar cries. The hare remains quiet, and it is sometimes possible to take him up, terrified as he is in the midst of the black circle of gobbling beaks and heads. The language of the turkeys is at that time incontestably significant. It is warlike and similar to that of the males when they are fighting. In the present instance they have joined for war, and they make it on the frightened hare.

All Lives Are Interesting.

Not a blade of grass but has a story to tell, not a heart but has its romance, not a life that does not hide a secret which is either its thorn or its spur. Everywhere grief, hope, comedy, tragedy, even under the petrification of old age, as in the twisted forms of fossils, we may discover the agitations and tortures of youth. This thought is the magic wand of poets and preachers. It strips the scales from our fleshly eyes and gives us a clear view into human life. It opens to the ear a world of unknown melodies and makes us understand the thousand languages of nature.—H. F. Amiel.

Shakespeare found "tongues in trees," but latter day scientists have found lungs also, showing that a tree is a breathing thing of life and energy and requires certain favorable environment before it can achieve its infant ambition to become a king of the forest.

Subscribe for The Morning Astorian, delivered by carrier, 60 cents per month. Publishes more news than all the other local papers combined.



Boss Horrigan.



Alwyn Bennett.

"Let them. They'll soon get hoarse and have to rest their throats. As long as we get the votes what do we care if"—

"Yes, yes!" agreed the boss impatiently. "That's all right, but what I want to know is, How does all this concern me?"

Horrigan threw himself back in his chair, uptilted cigar in one corner of his mouth, thumbs in waistcoat armholes and eyed his host quizzically.

Wainwright did not even pretend not to understand. Still, instead of giving a direct answer he went on with seeming irrelevance:

"I am a public spirited citizen. I believe civic welfare would suffer by any change in municipal administration, so to keep the present party in power I am willing to donate to it \$200,000 toward election expenses."

"That sounds pretty good as far as it goes, but maybe you didn't hear something I asked you a minute ago. What I want to know is, How does all this concern me?"

"I'm coming to that. As I said, I am a public spirited citizen. I'm also a good friend—such a good friend that I'm always glad to put my friends on to anything in the market that looks particularly promising. Suppose I carry for your account at the market price (that's 63 just now) 15,000 shares of Borough Street railway stock?"

"Well?"

"If that franchise is granted, Borough stock will go up at least 25 points within two days. That would clear up for you a profit of—let's see—about \$375,000."

Horrigan had pulled a pencil from his pocket and was figuring on the back of an envelope.

"Yes," he said at last; "that's right, \$375,000. That would be my profit, while yours would run into the millions. That's not warm enough friendship for me."

"Surely, that is a generous"—

"Generous, maybe, but I'd like some-



Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson stepped quietly over the threshold into the library, walked over to his employer, handed him a dispatch and went out again under the battery of Horrigan's glare, closing the office door after him.

Thompson