

A GENTLEMAN FROM MISSISSIPPI

By THOMAS A. WISE

Novelized From the Play by Frederick R. Toombs

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CHAPTER V.

THE BOSS OF THE SENATE INSPECTS A NEW MEMBER.

A actor playing the role of a big type of southern planter would score a decided success by picturing the character exactly after the fashion of Senator William H. Langdon as he strode to the desk of the International hotel. A wide brimmed black hat thrust back on his head, a long black perfect in his mouth, coattails spreading out behind as he walked, and the "Big Bill" Langdon smile on his face that carried sunshine and good will wherever he went, he was good to look on, an inspiration, particularly in Washington.

Following the senator were Miss Langdon and Hope Georgia, leading a retinue of hotel attendants staggering under a large assortment of luggage. Both beautiful girls, they caused a sensation all of their own. Carolina, a different type from the younger, had an austere loveliness denoting pride and birth, a brunette of the quality that has contributed so much to the fame of southern women. Hope Georgia, more girlish and a vivacious blond, was the special pet of her father and usually succeeded in doing with him what she chose.

A real senator and two such young women handsomely gowned seemed to take the old hotel back a score of years—back to the times when such sights were of daily occurrence. The ancient greatness of the now dingy International lived again.

"How are you, senator? Glad to welcome you, sir," was the clerk's greeting.

The genial senator held out his hand. Everybody was his friend.

"Glad to meet you, sir; glad to meet you," he exclaimed. "Must make you acquainted with my daughters. This is Miss Carolina Langdon, this Miss Hope Georgia Langdon."

The two girls, with their father's idea of courtesy, shook hands with the clerk, who was not at all taken aback by the unexpected honor.

Hope Georgia was thoroughly delighted with everything, but Carolina looked at the worn and faded walls and furnishings with evident distaste. "Oh, this is Washington," murmured Hope Georgia ecstatically, clasping her hands and gazing at a vista of artificial palms in a corridor.

"Ah, this is Washington," sighed the new senator contentedly as he gazed across a hall at the biggest and most gorgeous cigar stand he had ever seen or ever hoped to see—the only new thing added to the hotel since Grant was president.

"Truly magnificent establishment you have here, sir; magnificent!" he exclaimed as an imitation marble column came within his purview. "I remember my friend Senator Moseley speaking to me of it thirty years ago. Are our rooms ready?"

The clerk, hugely pleased, hastened to assure him that everything was in first class order, waiting.

"You better go up, girls, while I look around a bit and sort of get the hang of things."

"Yes, I think we had better look around a bit, too, before we decide, father," said Carolina diplomatically. Her father patted her affectionately on the arm.

"Now, don't you worry, Carolina. I see you think this place too expensive from its looks—too good for us. But I tell you the best, even this, isn't too good for you girls and your dad. Run away, and I'll come up and see you soon."

The new senator leaned his elbow on the desk, surveying the place.

"I understand this is a favorite haunt for the big men of Washington," he said.

The clerk eagerly agreed.

"Yes, indeed, senator; we have them all. Senator Peabody and Senator Stevens were here just a moment ago. Boy, find Senator Peabody and Senator Stevens and tell them Senator Langdon is here."

The two senators came quickly.

"I'm glad to see you, Langdon; glad to see you," exclaimed Stevens, with an assumption of earnestness. "I want to introduce you to Senator Peabody of Pennsylvania."

Peabody bowed, and Langdon held out his hand.

"I'm delighted to meet you, senator. This is a proud day for me, sir."

Peabody had put on his smoothest and most polished manner.

"I came especially to meet you, Senator Langdon," he said. "Although we are on different sides we may be interested in the same things. I hope we shall see a great deal of each other."

Langdon chuckled.

"That's mighty good of you, senator. I'm depending on you experienced fellows to put me through. Don't keep me away from this lawmaking business.

you know. Raising cotton, arguing the government and bossing niggers have been about the extent of my occupation for the last forty years, so I reckon I'm not much of a practical lawmaker."

"Oh, you'll learn; you'll learn quickly," assured Peabody. "With Stevens, here, for a guide you can't go wrong. We all look up to Stevens. He's one of the powers on your side. He's an able man, is Stevens."

The new senator from Mississippi gladly corroborated this.

"You're right, sir. A great man! I tell you, when he told that legislature what they ought to do, Senator Peabody, they did it. If it wasn't for Stevens I wouldn't be here now."

In mock protest the senior senator from Mississippi raised his hands.

"Now, now, Langdon, don't say that. Your worth, your integrity, your character and our old friendship got you the senatorship."

The old planter laughed gleefully. "Sure, Stevens, I have the character and the integrity, but I reckon the character and integrity wouldn't have done much business if you hadn't had the legislation."

Clearly delighted, Peabody considered it certain that this new senator knew just the way he should go and would cause no difficulty. His keen sense of gratitude made him appreciate how he had been elected. Peabody literally beamed on Langdon.

"I hope we shall be able to work a good deal together, senator," he said. "I have the interests of the south at heart, particularly with regard to this new naval base. Perhaps we may be able to get you on the naval committee."

"Me!" laughed Langdon. "Well, that would be going strong! But I tell you I'm for the naval base."

"For Altaicola?" suggested Stevens. Langdon hesitated. Peabody and Stevens watched him as eagles watch their prey from the mountain crag.

"Well, it looks to me like Altaicola ought to be a fine site. But the actual place isn't so important to me. I tell you, gentlemen," he said in impressive seriousness that rang with a sturdy American manhood—"I tell you that what is important is that the great, sweeping curve of the gulf shall hold some of those white ships of ours to watch over the Indies and the canal and to keep an eye on South America."

"And right there on our own southern coast I want these ships built and equipped and the guns cast and the men found to man them. I want the south to have her part in the nation's defense. I want her to have this great naval city as the living proof that there is again just one country—the United States—and the north and the south both have forgiven."

Senator Peabody clapped the new member on the back.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "You've got to make some speeches like that. We'll have you as the orator for the naval base."

Langdon's eyes opened wide.

"Orator!" he gasped. "Me! An orator!"

"Why, that was oratory, good oratory," exclaimed Stevens, with enthusiasm.

"Huh!" grunted the planter. "You call that oratory. Why, that was only the truth."

"We'll see that you do some more of it, then," laughed Peabody. "Remember, we count on you for the naval base."

"For rural simplicity he's perfection," whispered Peabody to Stevens as they left the planter. "He's a living picture of innocence. We'll push him forward and let him do the talking for the naval affairs committee. Hiding behind him, we could put through almost any kind of a proposition."

Once more did the senior senator from Mississippi acquiesce.

CHAPTER VI.

NEW FRIENDS—AND AN OLD ENEMY.

LANGDON gazed at the two departing senators with varied emotions. He sat down to think over what they had said and to carefully consider what manner of man was Peabody, who showed such an interest in him. He realized that he would have considerable intercourse with Peabody in the processes of legislation and finally had to admit to himself that he did not like the senator from Pennsylvania.

Just what it was Langdon could not at this time make certain, but he was mystified by traces of contradictions in the senator's character—slight traces, true, but traces nevertheless. Peabody's cordiality and sympathy were to Langdon's mind partly genuine and partly false. Just what was the cause of or the necessity for the ally in the true metal he could not fathom.

His talk with these famous lawmakers was unsatisfactory also in that it had conveyed to Langdon the suggestion that the senate was not primarily a great forum for the general and active consideration of weighty measures and of national policies. It had been his idea that the senate was primarily such a forum, but the attitude of Peabody and Stevens had hinted to him that there were matters of individual interest that outweighed public or national considerations. For instance,

they were anxious that Altaicola should have the naval base regardless of the claims or merits of any other section. That was unusual, puzzling to Langdon. Moreover, it was poor business, yet there were able business men in the senate. Not one of them would, for instance, think of buying a site for a factory until he had investigated many possible locations and then selected the most favorable one. Why was it, he pondered, that the business of the great United States of America was not conducted on business lines?

He must study the whole question intelligently; that was imperative. He must have advice, help. To whom was he to go for it? Stevens? Yes, his old friend, who knew all "the ropes." Yet even Stevens seemed different in Washington than Stevens in Mississippi. Here he played "second fiddle." He was even obsequious, Langdon had observed, to Peabody. In Mississippi he was a leader, and a strong one too. But Senator Langdon had not yet learned of the many founts from which political strength and political leadership may be gained.

What he finally decided on was the engaging of a secretary, but he must be one with knowledge of political operations, one who combined wisdom with honesty. Such an aid could prevent Langdon from making the many mistakes that invariably mark the new man in politics, and he could point out the most effective modes of procedure under given circumstances. It might prove difficult to find a man of the necessary qualifications who was not already employed, but in the meantime Langdon would watch the playing of the game himself and make his own deductions as best he could.

The senator started toward the hotel desk to ask regarding the whereabouts of his son Randolph when his attention was caught by the sight of three powerful negro porters endeavoring to thrust outdoors a threadbare old man. The victim's flowing white hair, white mustache and military bearing received short shrift.

"Come along, colonel! You can't sit here all day."

"You heard what I said," he drawled in the slow way natural to some men of the south when trouble threatens.

"I'd like to have you down in Mississippi for about ten minutes."

The head porter turned quickly on his assistants and drove them away, shouting at the top of his voice:

"Get about you' wuk. How dare you' interfere wid a friend of de senator's? I'll teach you' to be putting yob nose in where it ain't got no business."

The old man, astonished at the turn of events, came forward hesitatingly to Langdon.

"I'm very much obliged to you, sir," he said. "I'm Colonel Stoneman, an old soldier."

The Mississippian stretched forth his hand.

"My name is Langdon, sir—Senator Langdon of Mississippi. I am an old soldier too."

"Delighted, senator," exclaimed the seedy looking old man, taking the offered hand gratefully.

Stone-man bowed.

"I remember a young fool of a Johnnie reb dashing up the hill fifty yards ahead of his men, waving his sword and yelling like a wild Indian."

The southerner straightened up.

"Well, where in thundertation would you expect me to be, sir?" he exclaimed. "Behind them? I got my wound there. Laid me up for three months; like to have killed me."

Then a new idea struck him. "Why, colonel, it must have been a bullet from one of your men—from your regiment, sir?"

The old northerner pushed his fingers through his hair and shook his head apologetically.

"Why, senator, I'm afraid it was," he hesitated.

Langdon's easy method of making friends was well illustrated as he clapped his new companion on the back. Everybody he met was the Mississippian's friend until he had proved himself the contrary. That had been his rule through life.

"Come right over, colonel; have a cigar, sir." Then, as they lighted their cigars, he inquired, "What army corps were you with, colonel?"

"I was under Grant along the Tennessee," replied the old G. A. R. man. "Familiarity with a senator was something new for him, and already he was straightening up and becoming more of a man every moment. Langdon was thoroughly interested."

"I was along the Tennessee under Benavergard," he said.

"Great generals, sir! Great generals!" exclaimed Colonel Stoneman. "And great fighting, I reckon!" echoed the Confederate. "You remember the battle of Crawfordsville?"

The old Federal smiled with joyous recollection.

"Do I? Well, I should say I did! Were you there, senator?"

"Was I there? Why, I remember every shot that was fired. I was under Kirby, who turned your left wing."

The attitude of the northern soldier changed instantly. He drew himself up with cold dignity. Plainly he felt that he had the honor of his army to sustain.

"Our left wing was never turned, sir!" he exclaimed with dignity. Langdon stared at him with amazement. This was a point of view the Confederates had never held before.

"Never turned!" he gasped. "Don't tell me that! I was there, and, besides, I've fought this battle on an average of twice a week ever since '05 down in Mississippi, and in all these years I never heard such a foolish statement."

"What rank were you, sir?" asked the Union soldier haughtily.

"I was a captain that morning," confessed the southerner.

His old enemy smiled with superiority.

"As a colonel I've probably got more accurate information," he said.

"I was a colonel that evening," came the dry retort.

"But in an inferior army. We licked you, sir!" cried Stoneman hotly.

The Mississippian drew himself up with all the dignity common to the old Confederate soldier explaining the war.

"The south was never whipped, sir. We honorably surrendered, sir. We surrendered to save the country, sir, but we were never whipped."

"Did you not run at Kenyon Hill?" taunted Stoneman.

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Fourteen Mail Clerks.
La Grande is the headquarters for fourteen railway mail clerks, but there are but four of the lot who are here together at one time, says the Star. Twelve of the clerks are on the main line trains and their routes are to Portland and to Pocatello. Two of these stay over from the morning trains from the east until night and one stops off from the west from night until morning. Two mail clerks are now on the run out from La Grande on the Willowa mail cars. One of them is Polk Mays, Jr., who for the past two years has been on the main line between La Grande and Pocatello. The other mail clerk on the Willowa branch is a new man, W. H. Bellinger, whose former home was in McMinnville.

Everyone would be benefited by take Foley's Orino Laxative for constipation, stomach and liver trouble, as it sweetens the stomach and breath, gently stimulates the liver and regulates the bowels and is much superior to pills and ordinary laxatives. Why not try Foley's Orino Laxative today? Burnaugh & Mayfield.

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STONE-MAN BOWED.

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"Did you not run at Kenyon Hill?" taunted Stoneman.

Langdon brought down his fist in the palm of the other hand violently.

"Yes, sir; we ran at you. I ought to remember. I got my wound there. You remember that long lane?—He pulled off his hat and threw it on the floor, indicating it with one hand—"

"Here was the Second Alabama."

The hat of the old Federal dropped on the floor opposite the hat of the Confederate.

"And here the Eighth Illinois," exclaimed Stoneman.

Langdon excitedly seized a diminutive bellboy passing by and planted him alongside his hat.

"Stay there a minute," he cried. "You"

ARE THE FOGHORN VIGILANT.

The newspaper Stoneman was carrying came down opposite the startled bellboy, who was trying not to appear frightened.

"This is the clump of cedars," he exclaimed.

Both, in their eagerness, were bending down over their improvised battle plan, their heads close together.

"And here a farmhouse beside your cedars," cried Langdon.

"That's where the rebels charged us," echoed the Union man.

Langdon brought down his fist again with emphatic gesture.

"You bet we charged you! The Third Mississippi charged you! I charged you, sir!"

Langdon's eyes were big with the afterglow of a fighter discussing the mighty struggles of the past, those most precious of all the jewels in the treasure store of a soldier's memory.

"Why, it might have been a bullet fired by you, sir," he cried. "It might be that you were the man who almost killed me. Why, confound you, sir, I'm glad to meet you!"

Each old veteran of tragic days gone by had quite unconsciously awakened a responsive chord in the heart of the other. A senator and a penniless old "down and outer" are very much the same in the human scale that takes note of the inside and not the "outside" of a man. And they fell into each other's arms then and there, for that strong fighter does not respect another of his kind?

There they stood, arms around each other, clapping each other on the back.

Sore Nipples.

Any mother who has had experience with this distressing ailment will be pleased to know that a cure may be effected by applying Chamberlain's Salve as soon as the child is done nursing. Wipe it off with a soft cloth before allowing the baby a nurse. Many trained nurses use his salve with best results. For sale by Burnaugh & Mayfield.

(Continued next week.)

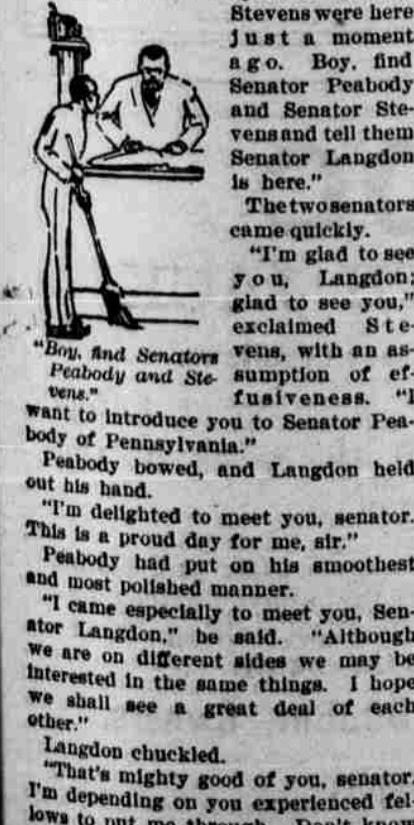
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"Here was the Second Alabama" actually chortling in the pure ecstasy of comradeship, now serious, again laughing, when on the scene appeared Bud Haines, the correspondent, who had returned to interview the new senator from Mississippi.

"Great heavens!" ejaculated the newspaper man. "A senator, a United States senator, lugging a broken down old 'has been'! What is the world coming to?" Haines suddenly paused. "I wonder if it can be a pose—merely for effect. It's getting harder every day to tell what's genuine and what isn't in this town."