

THE FOURTH ESTATE

Novelized by
FREDERICK R. TOOMBS

From the Great Play
of the Same Name by
Joseph Medill Patterson
and Harriet Ford.

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CHAPTER VII.

BRAND and Nolan came out of the library after their smoke and were surprised to find Judge Bartelmy and Dupuy in the drawing room. Brand did not appear enthusiastic at the circumstance and, nodding stiffly in the general direction of the two men, proceeded to circle around them toward the door leading to the hall.

Judge Bartelmy advanced pleasantly toward the newspaper owner, who greeted him courteously.

"Judge, this is an unexpected honor." "An honor to come—believe me, Mr. Nolan, an honor to come."

Nolan saw Brand's dexterous maneuver toward the door, and on calling to him not to go he halted, turned toward the center of the room and stood watching the strangely assorted group of men.

Nolan next addressed Dupuy, who expressed his thanks at the granting of his request for an interview.

Judge Bartelmy, always quick to notice every detail or phase of what was transpiring in his immediate presence, saw that Brand was ill at ease. He called to him cheerily:

"My daughter and I were just speaking of you, Wheeler. The reformer sails a treacherous sea."

"The port is in sight, Judge Bartelmy," was the calm answer.

Bartelmy would have made a success on the stage. In fact, he had been acting a part most of his life and proved the truth of Richard Mansfield's aphorism that "the best actors are never seen on the stage."

At Wheeler Brand's significant reply, which smote as ominously on the ears of the judge as it did on those of Dupuy, the jurist gave an inward shiver quite imperceptible to the eye and replied in the most jovial of manners:

"So? So? That's good. That's worth while. Stick to the helm, my boy," he laughed.

"Brand ain't at sea, judge," put in Nolan good naturedly. "He's in the clouds. The air up there makes your nose bleed; but, by the eternal, you see all that's going on down here."

There was much "going on down here" that Bartelmy by all means preferred to have remain unseen, yet he managed to reply, with an attempt at sincerity:

"More power to you, Wheeler! More power to you!"

Nolan stepped toward the jurist. "You're a generous foe, Judge Bartelmy," he said warmly, deceived by the smooth tactics of the judge.

"Foe? That's hardly the word," responded Bartelmy, and with deference: "Wheeler and I merely engage differently. He is dynamic; I am static, and that is because he is young and I am old."

"He'll outgrow that, judge. You never will," remarked Dupuy, crossing to Nolan's side.

"But under every system of free government," pronounced Bartelmy in his best judicial manner, "there have always been conservative and liberal parties, whose leaders, while they differed perhaps in method, have been stimulated by an equal love of country."

"That is true, Judge Bartelmy," said Brand, "but I can't concede that you belong to the conservative party."

The judge showed surprise. "But I don't understand you," he stammered, when Brand went on determinedly:

"Are you not seeking to introduce into our country methods of government undreamed of by our forefathers?"

The judge laughed as though in agreeable tolerance. His skill at verbal parrying was standing him in good stead.

"Oh, I had as much enthusiasm myself in my youth," he said, "but my legal training has forced upon me a certain unfortunate exactitude of thought. But come, come. We old lawyers have long since learned that we cannot carry our quarrels out of court. For instance, of a morning my best friend, Judge Culver, may be at draws swords with me over some point of law, but the same evening will find us half fellows well met, exchanging stories before a club fire."

Nolan nodded his head understandingly.

"Yes, judge, that's life—that's life," he commented.

"Half the laws of our country are framed up in clubs," interjected Dupuy.

Bartelmy raised his hand and made a gesture of disapproval. "I wouldn't say that."

Brand saw an opportunity to score. "Likewise the safest methods of wading the laws are framed up in clubs," he shot at Dupuy.

Bartelmy pretended to side with Brand.

"That's neat, Wheeler," he laughed. "He scored off you that time, Dupuy." Bartelmy paused. He had now reached a point where he was about to make his supreme effort to capture Nolan and the Advance, to make them friendly to him. He was about to play what Dupuy had truthfully termed "the trump card." "By the way, Mr. Nolan, Judge Culver and I usually dine two or three times a week at

the Oak Door club. We need you there. We should have a man in all our discussions of public questions—we should have a practical man of affairs who knows what reformers like our young friend here are really trying to get at. Shall I propose you for membership?"

Dupuy watched the effect of Bartelmy's words on Nolan with intense eagerness. It was an anxious moment for both Dupuy and Bartelmy. If Nolan accepted they felt that they were safe. As for Nolan, he was greatly perplexed. He wanted to accept the proffer, both for his own sake and for his family's. Membership in the Oak Door club was equivalent to a ticket of admission into the fashionable circles of the city. He would be able then to put his wife and daughter in the way of gratifying their desires. Sylvester, too, would be benefited in whatever business career he should take up, and the membership would enable him to meet and make his personal friends the most prominent men of the city—the men he naturally craved to associate with—on terms of equality. Then he spoke:

"Really, judge," he said warmly, "that's something that I never expected to hear from your lips."

"Not at all; not at all! I shall be delighted to put you up, and Dupuy will second me."

"With pleasure," bowed the lawyer.

Nolan hesitated over his duty. He remembered what Brand had stated regarding the attentions of Judge Bartelmy and his daughter. Probably this offer was a trick, a bribe, and it did not improve the situation to have Dupuy brought into it by the jurist's second of his nomination. Still, the idea came into his head—it he accepted it he did it with his eyes open; he need not necessarily change the policy of the Advance toward certain public men. Thus he reasoned, and still there lingered within him an insidious desire, even a prompting, in view of the advantages for himself and his family, to accept at all hazards, under any circumstances.

"Thank you, gentlemen, thank you," he said, temporizing, in an endeavor to gain time before actually committing himself. He glanced across the room at Wheeler Brand, wondering how he was accepting the situation. Brand took a quick step forward, straightened himself stiffly and shot a glance of warning over the shoulder of Bartelmy, whose back was turned to him. Nolan nodded his head slightly to show that he understood. Dupuy caught the interchange of signals, and he glared malignantly at the young managing editor. He saw that Brand would do his utmost to swing Nolan away from the subtle snare. Nolan addressed the judge, "I'll think it over—and thank you once more."

Bartelmy and Dupuy started toward a door.

"Now, if you will excuse us, Dupuy and I will join the ladies," said the jurist. "Wheeler, you're not going away yet, eh?" he added.

Brand moved toward the half door and ignored the query.

"What's your hurry, Wheeler?" asked Nolan as Bartelmy and Dupuy disappeared.

"Oh, it's time to get back to the office."

"H-m! What's the trouble?"

"What's the use of talking about it?" "Come, get it off your chest."

"I don't have to tell you, Mr. Nolan." He drew closer to his employer.

"You think Mike Nolan is going back on you—isn't that it?"

The young man's voice rang out in his deep disappointment that Nolan was lingering on the verge of an acceptance of Bartelmy's offer, which could mean only two things if his employer yielded, and these were the muzzling of the Advance and the silencing of the paper. He blamed Nolan bitterly for failing to spurn the offer outright on the moment.

"Do you think you can accept favors from Bartelmy with one hand," he cried, "and kolfe him with the other?"

Nolan gave a spirited but kindly reply:

"Hold your horses, Wheeler. You know I don't care anything about this social stunt for myself. It don't fit into my life, but remember I've got a family, and nothing comes ahead of them. Mother and I may have a jangle now and then; but, after all, we have been side partners for a good many years. And my girl! There ain't a finer educated or a prettier girl in New York, and she ought to be able to go anywhere, but she can't in this town—this cold man's town. Then, of course, there's Sylvester. I know he ain't as bright as he might be, and I've spent—well, more than twice your salary trying to get him through fresh man year at Harvard, and I couldn't, but still he's my son, and if he wants to run around with these other sports, why not? I can afford it, and I guess the kid's got to sow his wild oats anyway. My wife and children ought to be happy with the money I've got, and as I figure it, if I join this Oak Door club I can help them to get what they want. Do you follow me, Brand?"

"Yes; I understand," sighed Brand. "At first you took up the side of the people, and you are continuing at it. But you and your family have become ambitions, or, at least, so far as you are concerned, you are ambitious for them. When you begin to associate familiarly with rich men as their friend you'll soon find yourself playing golf or billiards with one, drinking whiskey with another, and your son will marry the daughter of a third. You will forget all about the people. Your paper will become decadent and feeble. The circulation will dry up." He paused for breath and added warningly in strong tones, "The Advance is now at its zenith, but its decline begins the very day that you are elected to the Oak Door club."

Nolan reached over and seized Brand by the shoulder.

"Wheeler, you're a decent sort of a fellow. I like you and the things

you've made the paper stand for, but you don't know what it means to put people that you love on the altar and cause them suffering for the sake of these—these general principles."

"Don't!" exclaimed the young editor. "Well, that's exactly what I've done. I gave up the girl I loved, who had promised to be my wife, so that I might write the truth." In spite of the emotion which his words had aroused in him Brand's voice never faltered as he spoke.

"You did?" exclaimed Nolan amazedly. "Well, my boy, I don't understand you. I couldn't do that," he confessed.

"Don't think that it was easy for me to do. I've thought of her every hour of every day since, but she's—now his voice wavered—"well, she's forgotten, so it doesn't matter. Mr. Nolan, do you remember what it was that first brought us together?"

"Yes; that story about Judge Bartelmy, and it was a good one, and you've followed it up with a lot of good ones since. Why, Wheeler, there ain't a man in the country that can work up a series like you can. But, do you know, I'm beginning to think that the judge is not all bad. Mind you, I'm not forgetting old scores, but—"

"No, perhaps we haven't all the facts of that affair? Some things have happened. Are you sure that he's so all-fired wrong?"

"Mr. Nolan, the half hasn't been told about Judge Bartelmy," cried Brand.

"Well, this is getting to be a pretty serious affair. We can't be too sure about our facts."

"Mr. Nolan, Judge Bartelmy is not only a dishonest judge, but he seems to have a destructive influence on every one near him. He's corrupt and corrupting, not only in his public but in his private life."

"Wasn't—wasn't it his daughter that you were engaged to?"

"Yes, it was, and he's using her just as he did her mother before her."

"You amaze me. What do you mean?"

Brand took a deep breath. "Why, he surrounded her mother with machine politicians and shady financiers and crooked lawyers. He sent her to the state capital when he wanted to be senator, but it was impossible; to Washington when he wanted to be minister to France, and she failed, and again when he wanted to be judge, and she succeeded, and when she found out that he was using his judicial office to steal and that she had only been a lobbyist for his rotten schemes—"

"Well?"

"Well, it killed her, Mr. Nolan, and now he's using his daughter in the same way. He's filling his house with corporation jackals like Dupuy. He sends her here to maul you by working on your wife and daughter. He hates me, but he would let her marry me to have his enemy in the family and make him silent."

"Why don't you go to the girl and tell her?" suggested the newspaper owner.

"About her mother and why she died?"

"Well, perhaps not. But I hope you won't follow the Bartelmy story any further. I'll be just as well pleased."

"I've got to follow it, Mr. Nolan. I can't stop," ejaculated Brand. "I've got the goods on him now. I've got a story that will drive him off the bench when we print it."

"What? half rising."

"True; every word of it." Brand paced nervously across the room.

"For God's sake, Wheeler, don't go off at half cock!" cried Nolan.

"Half cock! Why, I tell you I've got the facts. I've been working on it for months."

"Now, listen to me. You're a young man, in spite of what you say about him I know that in his public life he's mighty well thought of by some of the most prominent men in this city, and—"

"—weakly—well, if they believe in him I don't see—"

"—why?"

"Why nothing convince you?" excitedly, "if he should offer me a bribe to kill this story would you acknowledge then that he's a crook?"

"Why, yes, of course I would."

"Will you let me print that story in my own way and promise not to interfere?"

"Yes. But the girl," Nolan reminded him—"how do you think she'll feel if you print that story?"

"But Brand was not to be swerved from his purpose."

"It can't be helped. I've got to go on. Somehow you know the thought comes to me that perhaps it all may turn out for the best."

"Well, I hope so," commented the newspaper owner, "but, man alive, this story you!"

He was forced to cease abruptly, for Judge Bartelmy and Ed Dupuy entered the drawing room and drew near.

(To Be Continued.)

Hanna Affirmed.

E. M. Albright, Carl Wintjen and Ed Burke, appellants, vs. Martin Browne, respondent, appealed from the circuit court for Josephine county. H. K. Hanna, judge, has been affirmed in an opinion written by Chief Justice Moore of the supreme court.

If not more than a hundred other people in this city read and answer more want ads than you do, you've learned "a lot" about how to "make your way" in this city.

WILBU RWRIGHT SEEKS SUITABLE GROUNDS

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Feb. 24.—Wilbur Wright surprised the officers of the Commercial club today by dropping in casually and asking if he could be supplied with suitable grounds for experiments with some new machines which he hopes to try out before spring.

"I heard yesterday that you had many large level plains and could take care of us," he said. "So I am here."

Up to nightfall he had found no place to suit him. Mr. Wright said: "There are many things yet to be developed before airplanes are a success in a practical way. It will take many years for the flying ship to take anything away from the railroad or boat lines. In the nature of the case they must be used for special service, quick dispatch and things of this character." "We are getting along rapidly, but there is yet much to learn."

The bad weather of the Carolinas drove the aviator south to look for open ground and sunshine. He came here from Florida and will go east if such as he wants be not provided.

Phoenix Christian.

At the Christian church the pastor announces for next Sunday's service as follows: 10 a. m., Sunday school, closing with ten minutes' talk to the children; 11 a. m., preaching and communion, subject, "What Then?"; evening 7:15, Endeavor; 7:45 p. m., preaching, subject, "The Tree of Life."

Something that you ought to be wearing by tomorrow is probably advertised in today's paper.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTOR.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed by the county court of the state of Oregon in and for the county of Jackson as executor of the estate of August Meyer, deceased, and has qualified. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present them with proper vouchers and duly verified to the undersigned at Lake Creek, Oregon, or to Vawter & Purdin, attorneys for the estate, at Medford, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice.

Dated and first published February 25, 1910.

HENRY MEYER,
Executor of the Estate of August Meyer, Deceased.
W. I. VAWTER and
M. PURDIN,
Attorneys for Estate.

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Mi-o-na stomach tablets give a constant relief, of course, but they do more; they drive out the poisonous gases that cause fermentation of food and thoroughly clean, renovate and strengthen the stomach so that it can readily digest food without artificial aid.

Mi-o-na stomach tablets are guaranteed to cure indigestion, acute or chronic, or money back. This means that nervousness, dizziness, and biliousness will disappear. Druggists everywhere and Chas. Strang sell Mi-o-na for 50c a large box. Test samples free from Booth's Mi-o-na, Buffalo, N. Y.

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\$7500—Ten acres, all planted to Newtown and Spitzenberg apples, 7 to 11 years old.

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