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HIS RISE TO POWER

"One has a bond from the bottom up ward. The nation can be saved from its sins neither by strong individuals nor by mechanical systems. Only by the aroused moral sense of the people. a realization and acceptance of political responsibility, and a man can't very successfully preach political morality unless he practices it. He has to serve in the way for which he's best fitted I don't think I'm cut out for a boss.

Haig." Halg growled again. "Service-who wants your service? What you need is some woman to come along and marry you out of hand and teach you common sense. Why didn't you marry Katherine Hampden when you had the chance?"

"I never really had the chance." John replied calmly.

"Oh, go to the devil." And with characteristic abruptness Haig

and walked out of the office. A minute later he reappeared to de-

mand, "Do you still want to?" "Want to what?" said John so blankly that Halg again recommended the devil as bis nitimate destination and withdrew.

Out in the street he stopped long enough to look back through the window. John was still absently jaling the coals. Haig shook his head and passed on, muttering to the snowy night:

"I have seen a miracle-a man who has tested, yet believes in the people and who has loved the same woman through five years, I wonder how

long his courage will hold out?" John drew up to the desk and began a letter. It did not progress rapidly, His pen had gone as far as "Replying to your favor of the 20th inst.," when it fell unnoticed from his fingers. He returned to his contemplation of the

He was thinking of Katherine Hampden. He had been thinking of her a great deal lately, after a long period in which he had kept the remembrance of her in the secret, rarely opened chamber of his innermost conscious-

It had been the easier to bury, if not completely to forget, the past, because Katherine's life and his had not often crossed. The incident of the flowers has been told. One day, a week before the conversation just narrated. they had accidentally met.

He was in the Steel City to deliver his lecture on "Civic Responsibility" before one of the reform bodies that discussed, but did nothing to alleviate the city's ills. For early lancheon be went into a restaurant where elab orate trappings and service enabled the patron to ignore the moderately well cooked food and immoderately

As he was passing through the foyer he came face to face with Katherine Hampden and another lady. whose attire proclaimed her one fashion's elect. There was a moment's hesitation, and then impulsively Katherine held out her hand. Mutual inquiries concerning each other's health followed, were satisfactorily answered. and Katherine introduced him to her companion. Mrs. Deland nodded distantly, as from a great height, down upon the rather countrified looking

man who carried the queer, black "This is the Mr. Dunmeade." Kath-

erine explained. "Oh, indeed." was the murmured answer, accompanied by a vacuous smile. Mrs. Deland, it was clear, had never heard of "the Mr. Dunmeade." then another group entered the fover and with scant ceremony she escaped

to join them. Kutherine suid: "There isn't any reason why we shouldu't have a nice, chummy little chat, is there? I am waiting for Mr. Gregg, who is always late. Shall we

sit down somewhere?" He assented, and they ensconced themselves on a luxurious davenpor with which the fover was equipped.

"He is still faithful, you see," she laughed. Obviously she referred Gregg. "They are preparing to lay me on the shelf. I am almost twenty-nine, you may remember. And they are beginning to put me on boards and committees and things already! is suspected in some quarters that I

He smiled his skepticism "No. I don't though no doubt I'll come to it in time. About yourself. You have had some very interesting experiences, haven't you? I keep tab on you through the newspapers. I deard a man pay you a very fine complimen Ought I to tell you, I wonder? Or do you receive so many that one more

wouldn't interest?" "It is when we get few that a con pliment is dangerous. I'm not sure

but I'll risk it," he said idly "He said, 'A man can't keep on preaching decency as earnestly and bravely as Dunmeade does unless he's a pretty decent sort of chap himself." I don't mind telling you it was Mr. Gregg who said that." She did not add that Gregg had qualified his compile ment with, "Of course he's a crank.

"That was kind of Gregg." "He often speaks of you. He ad mires you and is very much interested in your-career. We may call it that, mayn't we?"

"If you can't think of a better word. He wished it were not necessary to bring Gregg's name so often into the

They talked for a few minutes longer on uninteresting, impersonal subfects until they saw Gregg appear at ice." the entrance. But Mrs. Deland effusively waylaid him, and there was an awkward pause which John did not know how to bridge.

have been very brave and splendid Not many men would have held out

He was taken off his guard. "I did

not expect you to think so." "My-my notions of values and things have changed a good deat, I find. And, 1-may I go on?" She looked at Gregg He was still in Mrs. Deland's clutches. "I was a very selfish, thoughtless girl -then. I deliberately-no, carelessly. which is worse-jeopardized your hap-Murchell's inflexibility piness in the search for my own. bave been heartily ashamed of it. I-I hope it did not mean serious unhap-

not been unhappy." Then he rose to greet Gregg, who had extricated him-

time you're in town call me up and

But he did not miss Katherine's tone as she said to John, "Goodby and I am very glad of what you have just

Later, when they were at their table. Gregg said to Katherine, "I have a potion Dunmeade is the reason you have

kept me waiting so long." Under his gaze the tinge of color in her cheeks deepened. She made no "Does it ever occur to you," he ask-

ed, carefully setting down the glass, "that I might get tired of waiting?" "Does it ever occur to you," she auswered, "that I shouldn't care very

But of this John could know northing.

The ceremony of exchanging ministers was not an elaborate court function. Fifty odd gentlemen, representing each his principality, met in a hotel parlor and elected Mark Sherrod to succeed William Murchell as chairman of the state executive committee As the latter retired from the chair which, symbol of his undisputed sway, he had occupied for twenty years and his enemy took his place there was nothing to indicate that the seals of dominion had been formally transferred.

The monarch was not present in person. Many of the committeemen were surprised at Murchell's presence. They had thought that he would stay away to escape the last humiliation of beholding the formal ratification of his

accomplished defeat. He had gone to the meeting in a carriage because the weather was rough and his physical condition was not good. But when he left be forgot the carriage and started to walk to the house that he called home. He walked nimlessly, head lowered as though he were pondering some deep probles The defiant front that he had maintained before the committee had been pose. He was feeling old-old.

His course took him past a house of state, where the monarch sat enthroned amid his court, directing the affairs of his kingdom. What Mursaw was the office building of he Atlantic railroad. He entered an elevator and was rapidly hoisted to the proper story. A page of ebony skin

took his card. Murchell did not have to wait long. Soon he was before his former liege.

The royal brow wrinkled. "Isn' this a little indiscreet-considering the present state of public sentiment?" "What difference does it make-now? I've just come from the committee

"Yes?" Sackett understood. "She rod's elected, I suppose?"

"Yes. Thanks to your influence. "I'm sorry." Sackett's regret was genuine. "But I have my duty"-

"To your stockholders, of whom I am one. Yes, I know. I'm not complain ing." Murchell interrupted mildly. came to tell you to keep an eye of the Michigan. I've kept them out of the Steel City for you so far. Bu they're coming in. They ought to get in, too. At any rate, they're getting ready to spend a million in the at-I don't believe Sherrod can keep them out. Keep an eye on him.

"We're counting on you to be

shook his bead. "I'm through.' "Look here! What's the use of you

getting your back up over this business? You understand perfectly well that we must stand in with whoever's on top. 'You put Sherrod out and we'l back you as strong as ever. I wish," Sackett said persuasively, "you'd keep an oversight of the Michigan matter. I doubt myself that Sherrod can keep

"Little late thinking that, aren't you? He can't Don't trust him to do Sherrod won't last, Sackett. He has no self control. He's too greedy. But I'm through I don't want to put his

"We'll make it worth your while, if that's the trouble.

"You can't make it worth my while "You politicians," Sackett exclaimed angrily, "make me tired with your infernal bickerings and jealousies, I'd as soon be back in the old days"-

"No, you wouldn't." Murchell interrupted again dryly. "You wouldn't go back to those days for many times the millions it'll cost you to keep the Mich-Igan out-if you keep it out. You know that-I know it. You railroaders have grown bog fat the last few years just because in every state of the Union there's been a man like me, willing to prostitute himself at your serv- were too busy being in love with Anne

Sackett looked a real astonishmentand suspicion.

grimly answered the suspicion too late for the leopard to change his if that were possible. Her lips straight wisdom of which may be regarded as spots. I'm not going to fight you. I'm

Sackett's time was precious. Sackert. too, seemed to have forgotten this important fact. He was wrinkling his could have, if any one could." to devise to induce an old, pigheaded betrayed minister to remain in the service in a minor capacity. He was and to quit fighting the very first too shrewd to argue. For many years he had had intimate knowledge

"I'll tell you what I'll do. ut last. "I'll see Sherrod and"-Senator Murchell looked up sharpl He looked at her steadily. "I have as though he had forgotten the other's presence. "I'm through. The carned a rest, and my health's gone back on a I'm going back to the farm to raise po-The latter was very cordial. "Any tatoes-the farmer vote crop has peter

we'll lunch at the club. Any time, re- into politics I'll make my own terms." He nodded a careless goodby and went slowly out of the office. Apper | don't believe I'm a coward. A few ently he had forgoften to shake bijuds | months ago I did intend to quit-1 was Sackett did not remind him of the very tired and my sickness was comomission. He remained with the im- ing on But now-Roberta, can you pression of having beheld a broken, keep a secret?

CHAPTER XIV.

chell to give the world no ink- him to go to the devil. Roberta, it was supposed to be sulking over the church." his defeat. Not until after the fact did the surgeons, unable to refuse the opportunity for self advertisement, announce that a critical operation had been performed from which there were hopes of a partial recovery. Interest in his condition persisted extraordinarily. considering that he was out of politics

When his convalescence permitted he was removed to New Chelsea. That community, as you may believe, was properly excited, intrusively interested and somewhat apprehensive lest be pass unseasonably into the beyond and rob it of the distinction of being hi "legal residence." John Dunmend as a collaborator in this disaster, was made to feel a sudden atmospher frigidity and was led into further sorrowful reflections on the fickleness of the public. Murchell in very ungraclous fashion kept himself secluded from his neighbors and the stream of pilgrims that knocked at his gates. Their plaints were divers. Sherrod was too arbitrary, he was too lax, he permitted himself and his friends shake the plum trees of the cities so vigorously as to court failure of the crop, he greedly refused to divide the plums. From which it will appear that Sherrod, even thus early in his minis try, showed an incomplete mastery of the subtle science of suiting the word to the man. Murchell was urged to h tervene, to resist, to destroy. For one and all he had only the irritable re iteration, "I am out of politics."

Michigan raffrond began secretly undermine the Steel City, that hitherto impregnable fortress of the rival monarch, And John funmende's anrenominated as district attorney or not. he would be a candidate, anti-Sherrod and anti-Murchell, for the guberna- You mean am I going to turn reformtorial nomination. Jerry Brent was already well into a campaign for the op- tricks.

garded as an empty honor. that Miss Roberta turned the course ample, though arging her of history. But it is certain that she She went a few steps toward the door. was first to foresee, though not with then suddenly turned and walked back her bones, the fork of the road. touching were the pictures presented to her of Murchell's illness that at length, after a protracted struggle with herself, her heart relented. She filled a basket with homemade comestibles designed to tempt the appetite of the most jeded invalid. This basket on her arm, she set out, on a day when the March wind blustered and stung

ber face, toward Murchell's home She found Murchell reading before an open fire, his cheeks slightly pake and sunken, but his eyes clear and bright. He rose, with an ease that did not betoken approaching dissolu

tion, to relieve her of the basket, shak ing hands warmly,

"I'm very glad to see you, Robert She seated herself primly. "You don't look as bad as they say." She observ

"Roberta." he said "the doctors tell me that even with the best of care I can live only a few years and that's thanks to my good

"A few years!" she sniffed. "Wha did you expect, at your time of life?" He thought it wise to change the bject and hurriedly leaned over raised the napkin and peered into the

"Why! Did you bring all these for me, Roberta? That was very thought

"I guess you don't need them. Pretending to be sick to get people's sympathy because you've been beaten." He smiled, not in amusement, at her asperlty. "It's like you to cover a kind act with sharp words. Who an escape the men had that you rouldn't marry!"

"There weren't any to escape." You were what they call a beauty. weren't you? Why," be asked in sudden curiosity, "didn't you marry some "Because," she said simply, "you

Dunmeade to notice me." "Eb? 1-why, Roberta!" He stared at ber blankly. Then his manner quickly "You needn't be afraid." Murchell softened. She perceived the change and drew berself up even more stiffly.

> ened in a severe, thin line. "You needn't be sorry for

have found it a hard job, as you seem

His astonishment was genuine. "Eh! than Sherrist"

worse man thun I am, didn't be? I

"I've kept one for forty years." "No you have! Well, the other day ! got my doctor to tell me the things was characteristic of Mur- alive as long as possible and then tole ling of his illness. He was the first time I've sworn since I joined

to face him. "Why don't you help John?" It was his turn to stiffen angrity "You ask that after the way he a tacked me and created a sentiment against me that paved the way for Sherrod to best me? He's responsi for Sherrod's getting on top, do you know that? I gave him a chance five

will do nothing for him. only way I could."

"I wasn't thinking of him. He doesn't His astonishment was genuine as she left. He went to a window where ould watch her, still stiffly upright as a grenadier, breasting the March gale He tried to recall how she had ap peared when she was young, for she, too, all anknown to him, must bave marked a phase in the life of the young pan who once had been. When she

His book was forgotten. The Hou (; Washington Jenkins and een of the faithful at a time when beresy was profitable; bence his tall, Lincoln-like figure was one of the few that were not turned inhospitably away from Murchell's door.

He was lu New Chelseu a few days after Miss Roberta's neighborly errand "Wash," asked the senator abruptly, "how'd you like to be a candidate for

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

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