

Politics Their Only Support

Professional Politicians' Only Visible Means of Livelihood.

By ERNEST MCGAFFEY

Between Elections This Type Is Everlasting from Ghoul to Aeronaut.

There had grown up in our city an army of men who followed politics strictly as a means of earning a livelihood. They either expected to make a living by holding office of some kind or another, or they figured on making both ends meet by attaching themselves to the train of some "boss," who would dole out crumbs to them in some way, direct or indirect. Sometimes they figured on getting business of some kind through their connection with politics. But at any rate, there they were, with "no visible means of support" excepting politics. They might be in the directory as taxi-drivers, astronomers, chemists, rat-catchers, lawyers, aeronauts, plumbers, helpers, grave-diggers, clerks, or what you like, but as a matter of fact they depended on politics for a living.

Sometimes they were in one business, sometimes another, but you could find them always at the ward meetings, always at the primaries, always at the conventions, caucuses (when they could get in) at the city hall, at ward headquarters, at downtown headquarters, in the saloons where politicians might occasionally be found, at the funerals, dances, picnics, and all social gatherings, and, indeed, wherever acquaintance might be made or self-interest fostered. They were very busy individuals, and simply whirlwinds of energy around about election time.

If they had held a paying "job" for some time, and a change of administration had brought with it the disagreeable necessity of "resigning," they were usually "waiting" until the next municipal election. As these occurred every two years, in my time, the wait was over before the enforced "hand-to-mouth" existence entirely broke their spirits. Meantime, they skated about, working every avenue to keep alive and hold their own in "the organization." Give them credit, you with the three square meals a day, for their superb nerve. If you tackled one of these "captains of hope" he was as cheerful as a bumble bee on a thistle top. Everything was lovely, things never looked better, "the organization" was in elegant shape, "we" were going to win next time, etc. How he would lay down the assurance of victory with various tremendously suggestive chunks of "wisdom," culled from his ever-effervescent "bonnet." How sanguine he was of glory and of offices in the future. Well, even if it was straight "bunk" there was a gleam of possibility in it.

And his airy, insouciant, diffident "by the way, Bill, let me have a dollar till to-morrow" when the glittering "dope" had been exhausted—well, if you had it why not let him have it? The sands of every lucky office holder's career are strewn with the wrecks of dollars that were cast away to such siren invitations.

The evolution of such a politician might be from the bench of a bright young mechanic, ambitious to shine in the difficult calcium glare of publicity. He might get elected as a delegate to a city convention and get the "political bug" lodged under his hat. He might read up on the election laws and get so he could raise "a point of order" at a ward meeting. He might electioneer for some alderman, and, after the victory, get a bran new ten-dollar bill, which seemed like money off a Christmas tree. He might get elected secretary or president of the ward club. He might get to be a sort of political jackal to the "boss" who controlled his district. There were a great many ways in which he might distinguish himself in this way, but usually at the expense of his trade.

Or he might be some young lawyer with a gift for "the gab," who had attracted the attention of the leaders as having the nucleus of a "speaker" in him. If he was making money in his profession, so much the better. In that event, was "milked" for contributions to the party and sent broadcast at night to sit at the tobacco-enveloped empyrean of the halls where the voters gathered to hear about the "burning issues." These "voters," I may remark in passing, were confined to the garbage-wagon drivers, the sewer-pipe extension men, the city employees and others who had a real interest in politics, and who could stand all sorts of oratory if they could only smoke.

Such a victim as I have described was often held close to work and disbursement by promises, half-promises or suggestions of some prominent gift in the party nominations. Sometimes as the years rolled on and he never realized his ambitions, even in the shape of a nomination, he drew out a sadder and a wiser man and let the political will-o'-the-wisps alone.

But strange things happened in politics sometimes. One young lawyer, whose legal qualifications were meager to attenuation, had been nominated and elected to a certain office, and at the end of his term craved still higher honors official. So he got

a lawyer of his acquaintance, a venerable attorney of marked ability, to circulate a petition urging his nomination for a still higher position. The old lawyer circulated among the members of the bar of his acquaintances, and it was considered such a good joke that he got many prominent and influential names of lawyers who never gave a thought to the possible nomination of the young fellow. The petition aided the aspirant substantially; he got the nomination, and what's more, he was elected. He retired from office with fees of his office aggregating about a quarter of a million dollars.

And instances like these kept the young lawyers on the qui vive for a possible like happening in their cases. But the reverse of the medal was in the incident of a very bright young lawyer of my acquaintance, who got a nomination, lost the election, took to whisky as a cure, established a "touching route," where he collected dollars, half-dollars and quarters for awhile, and then died shortly after, a victim to the "political bug" and the "whisky bug" combined, than which no more fatal and totally destructive combination was ever invented.

The most successful of the local politicians were those who had lived in one ward all their lives, who had made politics their life-gamble, and who could "deliver the delegates." In conventions, as the delegates made the nominations, the more delegates a man absolutely controlled the more of a power he was. The young and ambitious political worker always started out to control the delegates in his precinct. Then he reached out after other precincts, and when the time came that he could control his ward he had arrived at the proud position of a "ward boss." This, however, required years of the most unremitting attention to detail, an immense amount of wire-pulling and strategy and a rigid distribution on as even terms as possible of all "patronage" which might come his way. The delegates were usually very much the same individuals from year to year. They might be shifted from one convention ticket to another, but the names of the "faithful" would be pretty sure to turn up annually, unless in case of death, and in that event someone would be selected who could be "controlled" like a tin soldier.

Politics as a profession develops shrewdness, nerve, capacity to "stand the gaff," oratory, conversational powers, personal magnetism, and, in fact, all the accomplishments of a first-class confidence man. Although, of course, all confidence men are not politicians. Needless to say, no suggestion is here made to "statesmen." These gentlemen do not mix with vulgar municipal politics, but get elected to senatorial and other offices and never get their names mixed up in any scandal save one befitting their honorable positions. Politics loosens the action of the pecuniary nerve, for no successful politician can be a "tightwad." He may think he can be economical, but he can't be. He may figure on what it is going to cost as to main outlay, but "perquisites" will eat him up quicker than nitric acid will cook an angworm. The hardened professional politicians know this only too well, and the result implants in



To Hear About the "Burning Issues."

their bosoms a pardonable curiosity in the question of "what there is in it for them" if any political proposition is unfolded to their longing gaze.

Politics as a profession has evolved the "boss." He is not always the coarse creature of the cartoonist's fancy, nor the devouring lion of the muckraker's romance. Often he dresses elegantly, and quite often he is gentle-spoken and of few words at that. He just controls the "delegates," that's all. After all the fire and fury of reform has spent its force, his candidate is nominated and generally elected, and he gets a few "contracts" which enable him to keep the wolf tribe so far from his premises that he couldn't hear one howl if it used a megaphone.

He is the man on whom the petty politicians keep their eyes glued and their ears tilted. Each one sees in his dreams his own career growing to the Aladdin like height of the "big boss."

And that subtle schemer nurses their aspirations, and as someone must necessarily take the place of the mighty when the mighty are fallen, of course there is a chance for all competitors.

Now as the mere mechanism of the game requires a very great familiarity with methods as well as men, it follows that the politician is a close student of the various cogs and wheels, the shafts and pulleys of political machinery. He finds, if a novice, that he cannot "butt in" and run things "right off the reel," because he does not know how. He finds that the nomination of candidates, the whole routine of political life, is governed by fixed rules and statutory laws, and that he must of necessity familiarize himself with these things else remain a mere tyro in the art.

This means that he will have to study books, read up the laws, keep posted in the changes which are continually occurring in the laws relating to elections and nominations, and in various ways "get next" to the legal aspects of politics. Then he will have to learn his ward; know its various precincts and their boundaries; know the location of the polling places, and who the people are in whose shops or stores the polling places have been placed, their politics, and everything about them. He must serve as clerk and judge of election, and learn the duties of a challenger. He must know



Each One Sees in His Dreams His Own Career Growing.

the poll list of his precinct as well as his a, b, c, and keep "tab" on deaths, removals, new residents, etc.

Politics affords a shining example of the wisdom of the rule about opening hostilities yourself. Never wait for the other fellow to assail your ability. Always start out by "soaking" him. And by this is not meant by any means to "throw mud" or indulge in abuse. Far from it. Do it in a gentlemanly way. Get him on the defensive and keep him there if possible. One of the surest ways to do this is to prepare a lot of questions, no matter how irrelevant to the questions at issue, if there happens to be any "issue," and keep hammering away at him with these questions.

Never answer any question yourself. Print your platform on your cards, if you are a candidate, but don't answer any questions about it. The platform speaks for itself, don't it? A professional politician ought to be able to convince the most captious questioner that "his platform" faces every way to the four corners of the earth and was meant for the blessing of all men. When he starts on his career he must expect to go slowly, as a rule, emerging from one unimportant position to another until he has either become a power himself or has been used as a power to some "Boss" to be placed on a ticket. Once fairly launched in a political office, and he becomes a target for the press and public criticism, and his native ability is subjected to the corrosive test of having power placed in his hands.

A good politician must always be on the alert to "catch the instant at its forward top" and direct the current of any popular movement into the proper channel. If there is a reform movement in the air he must not only champion it, but he must be in the lead of the crusaders. The public are the sheep, the politician is the bell-wether.

I remember a typical instance of this kind. A certain paving scheme was being broached, and in the district where it was proposed to introduce it, there were a great many Swedish-American citizens who opposed the improvement. Nearly all of them understood the English language as well their own tongue. A grand mass meeting was called for and held amid tumultuous enthusiasm. A well-known Swedish-American was selected as chairman, and a Swede secretary duly installed. Two speeches were made in Swedish, and then a popular Irish politician made a ringing address amid great applause. He was followed by a German lawyer who was even more fiery, if anything, than his predecessor in denouncing the outrage contemplated. The lawyer was also a politician.

A call for names was started and a club formed. There were 367 Swedish-American members of the club and the Irishman and the German, 369 members in all. And at the next meeting, postponed two weeks to elect officers, the Irishman was elected president and the German secretary and treasurer.

ERNEST MCGAFFEY. (Copyright, 1908, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

The first duty of a woman is her duty to her parents, and afterward to her husband and her husband's parents.

Graduated from the Bible.

Octave Thanet tells a story of an old dandy in Florida who was anxious to learn to read, so that he could read the Bible. He said that if he could read the Bible he would want nothing else. A friend of the narrator taught him to read. Some time afterward she visited his cabin and asked his wife how his Bible reading was getting on.

"Laws, Miss Fanny," said this person, "de jes' suttinly kin read fine. He's done got outen de Bible an' in de newspapers."



BLIND-FOLDED

By EARLE ASHLEY WILCOIT

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SYNOPSIS.

Giles Dudley arrived in San Francisco to join his friend and distant relative Henry Wilton, whom he was to assist in an important and mysterious task, and who accompanied Dudley on the nomination of the city. The trip marked the beginning of the two men's life together, and was a thrilling one. Dudley, who is a young man of noble character, is attracted to Luella, a beautiful girl who is the daughter of a wealthy man. The two men are joined by a common purpose, and they set out on a journey that will lead them to the heart of the matter.

The effect was instantaneous. With a succession of howls and curses the band broke and ran—all save one man, who leaped swiftly forward with a long knife in his hand. It would have gone hard with me if he had ever reached me, for he was a large and powerful fellow, and my last shot was gone. In the dark and smoky passage he stumbled over the prostrate body of the first desperado whom I had been fortunate enough to knock down, and fell sprawling at full length almost at my feet.

With one leap I was on his back, and with a blow from the revolver I had quieted him, wrenched the knife from his hand and had the point resting on his neck. Luella gave a scream. "Oh!" she cried, "are you hurt?" "No," I said lightly, "but I don't think this gentleman is feeling very well. He's likely to have a sore head for a day or two."

"Come back here," said Luella in a peremptory tone. "Those men may come again and shoot you." "I don't think so," said I. "The door is coming down. But, anyhow, I

CHAPTER XVIII—Continued. "There's one fellow there," I said. "But it's the one I knocked down." "Can't you see the others?" inquired Luella.

"No more in sight," said I, after a bolder survey. "They've run away." "Oh, I'm glad," said Luella. "I should have seen them always if you had killed them. Why did they attack us?"

Before I could reply to Luella's question, a tattoo was beaten upon the door and a muffled shout came from the other side. I stepped down from the stair to listen. "Are you hurt?" shouted Corson. "What's the matter?"

"No damage," I returned. "I drove them off." Corson shouted some further words, but they were lost in a sudden murmur of voices and a scuffle of feet that arose behind.

"Look out!" cried Luella peremptorily. "Come back here!" I have said that the passage opened into a little court, and at the end a lamp gave light to the court and the passage.

As I turned I saw a confusion of men pouring into the open space and heading for the passage. They were evidently Chinese, but in the gleam of the lamp I was sure I saw the evil face and snake-eyes of Tom Terrill. He was wrapped in the Chinese blouse, but I could not be mistaken. Then with a chorus of yells there was the crack of a pistol, and a bullet struck the door close to my ear.

It was all done in an instant. Before the sound of the shot I dropped, and then made a leap for the stair. "Oh!" cried Luella anxiously; "were you hit?"

"No, I'm all right," I said, "but it was a close shave. The gang means mischief." "Well, tell me something I can do," she said.

I gave her my small revolver. "Hand that to me when I want it," I said. "If I'm killed, get up the stairs and defend yourself with it. Don't fire unless you have to. We are short of ammunition." I had but three shots in the large six-shooter.

"Are they coming?" asked Luella, as the wild tumult of shouts stilled for a moment and a single voice could be heard. I peered cautiously around the corner. "There's a gentleman in a billycock hat who's rather anxious to have them lead the way," I said; "but they seem to prefer listening to fighting."

The gentleman whose voice was for war I discovered to be my snake-eyed friend. He seemed to be having difficulty with the language, and was kicking out his Pidgin-English with pantomime. "There!" cried Luella with a start; "what's that?"

A heavy blow shook the walls of the building and sounded through the passage. "Good!" I said. "If our friends yonder are going to make trouble they must do it at once. Corson's got an ax, and the door will be down first they know."

"Than Heaven!" whispered Luella. And then she began to tremble. The blows followed fast upon each other, but suddenly they were drowned in a chorus of yells, and a volley of revolver shots sent the bullets spitting against the door. "Look out, Miss Knapp," I said. "They're coming. Stand close behind me, and crouch down if they get this far."

the incident of his appearance to myself. "I don't see how he worked it," said Corson with a shake of the head. "They don't like to stand against a white man. It's a queer tale he must have told 'em, and a big sack he must have promised 'em to bring 'em down on ye. Was it for killin' ye they was tryin', or was they for catchin' ye alive?"

"They were trying to take us alive at first, I think, but the bullets whistled rather close for comfort." "I was a little shaky myself, when they plunked against the door," said Corson with a smile.

While Corson was attempting to explain the nature of the Chinese criminal element, Luella said: "Please get us out of this. I can't stand it."

I had marveled at her calm amid the excited talk of those about her, but I saw now that it was forced by an effort of her will. She was sadly shaken. "Take my arm," I said. "Mr. Corson will lead the way." I signed to Porter to go ahead and to Barkhouse and Wainwright to follow me. "It's very close here."

"It's very ridiculous of me," said Luella, with a hysterical laugh, "but I'm a little upset."

"I dare say you're not used to it," I suggested dryly. Luella gave me a quick glance. "No, are you? It's not customary in our family," she said with an attempt at gaiety.

I thought of the wolf-figure who had come out of the opium den and the face framed in the lantern flash of the alley, and was silent. Perhaps the thought of the scene of the passage had come to her, too, for she shudder-

ed and quickened her step as though to escape. "Do you want to go through the theater?" asked Corson.

"No—no," whispered Luella, "get me home at once."

"We have seen enough sights for the evening, I believe," said I. Mrs. Bowser was volubly regretful, but declined Corson's offer to chaperon her through a night of it.

On the way home Luella spoke not a word, but Mrs. Bowser filled the time with a detailed account of her emotions and sensations while Corson and his men were searching for us and beating down the door.

At the door Luella held out her hand impulsively. "I wish I knew whom to thank—but I do thank him—for my safety—perhaps my life. Believe me—I am grateful to a brave man."

I felt the warm clasp of her fingers for a moment, and then with a flash of her eyes that set my blood on fire she was gone, and I was staggering down Dodderidge Knapp's steps in a tumult of emotions.

CHAPTER XIX. A Deal in Stocks. The wolf-face, seamed with hatred and anger, and hideous with evil passions, that had glowered for a moment out of the smoky frame of the Chinese den, was still haunting me as

Trick of Young Girl Yields Good Financial Returns.

The 15-year-old daughter of a farmer living on the shores of Chesapeake bay, where wild ducks are found in greater numbers than anywhere else in the United States, has proved herself a better hunter than any of the men who make a living by it. She noticed that at one spot hundreds of ducks came ashore to eat the sorrel plant. She got a peck of corn, soaked it for two days in whisky, and then at night scattered it on the ground. Her father laughed at the idea, but he laughed too soon. The next morning a large number of the ducks came ashore for the sorrel, but took the

corn instead. The result was that over 50 of them were made so drunk that they were easily captured on the shore or by a boat, and the girl made over \$25 at one haul. Perhaps ducks shouldn't be tempted to become drunkards, but it is certainly an easy and profitable way to gather them for the market. The wonder is if the people who eat them will also become hilarious?

Line Pays No Dividends. The coach line that Alfred Vanderbilt has established between the Holland house, New York, and Ardsley on the Hudson is not a paying business. All the fares received in one season would not buy one of the eight Kentucky blooded horses that draw the coach. The round trip fare is \$5.

I forced myself once more to return to the office. Wednesday morning had come, and I was due to meet Dodderidge Knapp. But as I unlocked the door, I took some comfort in the reflection that I could hardly be more unwilling to meet the Wolf than he must be to meet me.

I had scarcely settled myself in my chair when I heard the key turn in the lock. The door swung open, and in walked Dodderidge Knapp.

I had thought to find at least some trace of the opium debauch through which I had gained the clew to his strange and contradictory acts. But the face before me was a mask that showed no sign of the experiences through which he had passed. For all that appeared, he might have employed the time since I had left here two days before in studying philosophy and cultivating peace and good will with his neighbors.

"Ah, Wilton," he said, affably, rubbing his hands with a purring growl. "You're ready for a hard day's work, I hope."

"Nothing would please me better," I said cheerfully, my repugnance melting away with the magnetism of his presence. "Is the black flag up to day?"

He looked at me in surprise for an instant, and then grinned, still in good humor: "No quarter" is the motto to-day. And I listened closely as the King of the Street gave his orders for the morning.

"You understand now," he said at the end of his orders, "that you are to sell all the Crown Diamond that the market will take, and buy all the Omega that you can get below one hundred."

"I understand." "We'll feed Decker about as big a dose as he can swallow, I reckon," said the King of the Street, grimly.

"One thing," I said, "I'd like to know if I'm the only one operating for you?"

The King of the Street drew his bushy brows down over his eyes and scowled at me a moment. "You're the only one in the big board," he said at last. "There are men in the other boards, you understand."

I thought I understood, and sallied forth for the battle. At Dodderidge Knapp's suggestion I arranged to do my business through three brokers, and added Lattimer and Hobart to Wallbridge, and Bockstein and Eppner.

Bockstein greeted me affably: "Welcome to de market voice more, Mr. — Mr. —" "Wilton," said Eppner, assisting his partner in his high, dry voice, with cold civility. His blue-black eyes regarded me as but a necessary part of the machinery of commerce.

I gave my orders briefly. "Dot is a larch order," said Bockstein dubiously. "You don't have to take it," I was about to retort, when Eppner's high-pitched voice interrupted: "It's all right. The customary margin is enough."

Wallbridge was more enthusiastic. "You've come just in the nick of time," said the stout little man, swabbing his bald head from force of habit, though the morning was chill. "The market has been drier than a fish-bone and duller than a foggy morning."

Lattimer and Hobart, after a polite explanation of their rules in regard to margins, and getting a certified check, became obsequiously anxious to do my bidding. I distributed the business with such judgment that I felt pretty sure our plans could not in any way be exposed, and took my place at the rail in the board room.

The opening proceedings were comparatively tame. I detected a sad falling-off in the quality and quantity of lung power and muscular activity among the buyers and sellers in the pit.

At the call of Confidence, Lattimer and Hobart began feeding shares to the market. Confidence dropped five points in half a minute, and the pit began to wake up.

There was a roar and a growl that showed me the animals were still alive. The Decker forces were taken by surprise, but with a hasty consultation came gallantly to the rescue of their stock. At the close of the call they had forced it back and one point higher than at the opening.

This, however, was but a skirmish of outposts. The fighting began at the call of Crown and Diamond. It opened at 63. The first bid was hardly made when with a bellow Wallbridge charged on Decker's broker, filled his bid, and offered a thousand shares at 62.

There was an answering roar from a hundred throats and a mob rushed on Wallbridge with the apparent intent of tearing him limb from limb. Wallbridge's offer was snapped up at once, but a few weak-kneed holders of the stock threw small blocks on the market.

These were taken up at once, and Decker's brokers were bidding 65. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Art in Spanish Bank Notes

To baffie the counterfeiters, who are both numerous and cunning in Madrid, the Bank of Spain has pursued the policy of changing its notes with great frequency and retiring each issue as fast as possible. The bank has now determined on a new plan. It has placed an order for a series of notes with an English concern, and it will rely for safety upon a special color process. In addition

the notes are to present pictures of well-known buildings in Spain, executed with a perfection that will defy counterfeiting. "The pictures are to be so beautiful that amateurs will be tempted to frame them," says one Spanish newspaper. "Hardly," rejoins another, "the cost of the set will be 1,675 pesetas, or so." To the Spanish mind \$338.50 is a great deal of money.

DUCKS ON A SPREE.

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