

the end from a fresh cigar and said: "But I'm not so sure, after all. My experience with the Bailey bill shook my faith in that proposition."

The two other men in the salon looked up with startled eyes.

Baldwin had been driven over from his Michigan Avenue home and caught of the corridor. A light was burning the Alton Limited when it made the station stop at Twenty-third Street, man himself, I knew, was over at the where he boarded the last of its curtained Pullmans. This coach was the political institution known to Illinois statesmanship as the Springfield sleeper, and Baldwin and his two companions, Jennings, the secretary of state, and Denny Healy, a canal commissioner, had the capsulated coziness of its smoking compartment all to mimic decorum over there-but the themselves. Down by Dwight they had fallen into a desultory discussion like a pack of wolves around the of the old question as to whether or not every man has his price. The whisky, shaking its fists under the question could hardly interest these men long, for, after many years' constant contemplation, under the gray dome of the state house, of the weaknesses of men, they had come to an acceptance of the doctrine now grown frank enough to have no lingering taint of cynicism. Jennings, indeed, had just dismissed the subject by declaring:

"All men air fer sale, an' most of 'em damn cheap.'

And so the subject might hav lapsed had it not been for Baldwin \* 1 .E.G. heterodoxy. That George R. Baldwin of all men should doubt the first maxim of their profession was beyond comprehension. Though he played his part in life with a suite of law offices in a skyscraper as a background, his serious business was lobbying bills through the legislature. His friends, who were many, boasted that he always stood by them, right or wrong. Which he did, indeed, and as they were generally wrong, the value of such friendship, or his opinions on practical politics, could hardly be overestimated. The day had been a hot one in Chicago, but now a cold through the narrow window-screen, on

Copyright by The Bo ALDWIN, the lobby- I know men who would have spent a ist, leaning forward fortune to give that legislature one with his elbows on more day of life, but it was sweephis knees, and ing on its midnight death. Somehow, swaying with the whenever I think of the legislature, I train as it swung think of that legislature, and whenout on to the rocky ever my mind conceives the state ledge that paves house it isn't pictured to me as standthe Valley of the ing there on the hill, stately in the Desplaines, consunshine, but as it appeared that night templatively cut as I walked over from the Leland, with the clouds flying low over its

dome. The lower floors were dark and still as sepulchres, and the messenger boys who came over from the Western Union, now and then, remind-

ed me of ghosts as they went by, their heels dragging on the marble floors in the governor's office, though the old mansion, pacing the floor of the library and cursing with classic curses. We were going to try that night to pass the Bailey bill over his veto.

"But the third floor blazed with electric lights, and the big dome was full of noisy echoes. The senate kept its coat on-you know how they house was in its shirtsleeves, huddled speaker's dais, with faces ripe with umbrella of cigar smoke. Every fellow was trying to get his bill passed in the last hour of the session-you know what it is, Hank?"

"Oah, yes," replied Jennings, "but 'tain't nothin' to what 't used to be ander the ol' constitution. We'd stack pile o' them 'ere private acts up on te clerk's desk, an' pass 'em all t' test 'ith a whoop. Them 'as the cays-but that 'as 'fore your time."

"The e must have been good old """ "sented the lobbyist, "for the

"I rechon! A feller could 'a' done business in them days! Ol' John M.'d better left the ol' constitution aloneit 'as good enough. But there 'as a passion fer change right after the

The lobbyist politely nodded concurrence in this view and continued:

"Some of the members clambered on to their desks, filling the air with oaths, ink bottles, and hurtling books with rattling leaves. Sometimes an iron weight sheathed in paper whizzed by on a vindictive mission, and one man made an Egyptian nigger-killer with rubber bands. Some even hurled draft of smoky air was sucking their copies of the revised statutes it was the first use they had ever found for them. Once in a while some one would toss a batch of printed bills to the ceiling, where they set the glass prisms of the chandeliers jingling, and then fell like autumn leaves, a shower of dead pledges and withered hopes. And out of all the hubbub rose a steady roar-' "Like at a lynchin' bee," assisted Jennings. "Exactly," assented Baldwin, who had never seen a lynching. "There were drunken howls and vacuous laughs, and yet we could hear through it all the hoarse voice of the clerk, his throat so heated that you could see the vapor of his breath, as you can an orator's, or a wood-chopper's in winter, rapidly intoning senate bills on third reading. The pages were growing heedless and impertinent. The newspaper correspondents, their dispatches on the wires, puffed their cigarettes in professional unconcern, and awaited happenings worthy of late bulletins. The older members, who had been through the mill many times before, lounged low in their seats. One could see, above their desks, only their heads and heels. The speaker, old 'Zeke himself, was in the chair, suave as ever, but growing caustic. He had splintered his sounding-board early in the evening, and had taken to tapping perfunctorily his walnut desk with his little inadequate gavel. And yet he and the older members and the newspaper men would cast occasionally an anxious glance at the clock, and an expectant one at the big doors. "As I sat there on the old, red lounge under the speaker's flag-draped canopy, I noticed Henderson of Greene, standing away back under the galleries on the Democratic side, eying the proceedings with the same mysterious stare that had never left him since he had been sworn in. As I have said, I had never spoken to the fellow, but I had always felt a pity for him-he impressed me as a man who had been stunned by repeated raps of bad luck. Along toward the end of the session he had brought his wife up from Greene County to the capital. She had that tired look that country women have. Her face was seame her cheeks hollow; her back was bent in a bow, and she walked hurriedly, anxiously along in her flapping skirts beside her tall and somber husband. She had never been away from home before, and the boys had many a laugh over her wonder at the trolley-cars purring along under the maple trees. and her fears of the elevators in the state house-though, for my part, I could see nothing ludicrous in it all. She stayed three or four days and the moth-eaten stuffed animals

are, and out to Camp Lincoln. They George pointed out members here and took many trolley rides, and even there, and whispered in their ears, climbed to the top of the state house supposed that they were doing great dome, whence, they say, you can things in the fight against the bill, see Rochester and the prairies for but that was only another time when thirty miles around. He brought her they deluded their precious selves. over to the house one or two morn-They did their reforming chiefly at ings, but not on to the floor as other banquets, but George and the old members did their over-dressed wives: man knew a thing or two about polihe sent her up to the gallery, where tics themselves, and George, standing she sat peering down over the railing back by the Democratic cloak-room, smoking his little cigarettes, was diat the gang-and her husband, who took no part in all that was going on. recting that fight with the party lash "The old woman's interest in all in his hand, and some of the best these new things that had come into men on the floor of the house to do his her starved life, her ill-concealed bidding. He was the only private sec-

pride in her husband's membership retary I ever knew who could set an in such a distinguished body of lawarmy in the field. givers, were touching to me, and as I "But through it all old 'Zeke stood looked at him that last night of the there, game as ever, with a hard, cold smile on his face, and you could hear session, and thought of her, the wish to do something to lighten their lives the sharp, monotonous rap of his gavcame into my heart, but just then, el, rap, rap, rap, neither fast nor slow. suddenly, old 'Zeke started from his The tumult did not die during the chair, grasped his gavel firmly, and reading of that scathing mesage, and leaned expectantly over his desk. At when Hen's ruined voice ceased, and the same instant the older members he rolled the message up again and dragged their feet down from their thrust it in his desk, 'Zeke smashed desks and sat bolt upright. The newshis gavel down and I heard him say: paper men flung away their cigarettes 'Will the house be in order?' and adjusted their eye-glasses. The as-"And it was in order, for 'Zeke sistant clerk, who had been reading, knew how to compel order in that looked up from the bill then under what I suppose they would have called consideration, and hurriedly gave his

bear-pit when he wanted to, and he never raised his voice to do it either. only his eye and the gavel. And so, place at the reading desk to the clerk when they were quiet, he said: "The of the house. I knew what was comquestion is: Shall the house concur ing. I knew that the Bailey bill was with the senate in the passage of senon its way over from the senate. And ate bill No. 106, notwithstanding the objections of the governor?'

"The house tried to break away from him again, but he held it in his gavel fist, drawing the curb tight, and turned to recognize old Long John Riley, who was standing like a tall tree beside his desk, with his hand upraised.

"'The gentleman from Cook!' "'Mr. Speaker,' said Riley, 'I move the previous question.'

shirt-sleeves, as though a flashlight "There was another roar, but 'Zeke's photograph were to be taken. Halfgavel fell, and his eyes blazed black way down the aisle stood Hill. You again, and he said:

know how he would look at such a "'The gentleman from Cook moves time, in his long black coat, his wide the previous question, and the queswhite shirt bosom with the big diation is: Shall the main question be mond, his rolling collar and black now put? Those in favor of this quesstring tie, and his long black hair fall- tion will say aye'-there was a roar of



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which the cinders hailed as the Limited plunged southward.

Baldwin had lighted his imported cigar, the superior aroma of which, perceptible even in an atmosphere choked with coal gases and the fumes of the domestic cigars Jennings and Healy were smoking, indicated faintly the height of cultivation to which he had brought his appetites, when Jennings, flecking his ashes on the floor of the salon just as he would have done on his own parlor carpet, said:

"Well, go on with the story." "One session there was an old man named Henderson in the house, who had come up from Greene County; Henderson of Greene, everybody called him, to distinguish him from Tom Henderson, of Effingham. He was a queer figure was Henderson of Greene, tall and gaunt, with a stoop in his shoulders. He always wore a hickory shirt, opened at a red and wrinkled throat, and his hair was just a stubble bleached by harvest suns. The old man was a riddle to everybody in Springfield that winter. He was always in his seat, even on Monday evenings, when no one else was there. He voted always with his party, and he voted consistently as well, like a good country member, against all the Chicago legislation. But he was a silent man, who stood apart from his fellows, looking with eyes that peered from under his shaggy, sun burned brows with an expression no one could fathom. He never made a speech, he never introduced a bill, he never offered a resolution, he never even presented a petition, and when the speaker made his committee assignments, he placed the old man on the committees on History, Geology and Science, and on Civil Service Reform, and he did not even look disappointed."

The two politicians chuckled. "As for me," continued Baldwin, "I never spoke to him, and never knew any one who did. The speaker himself only addressed him-and then as the gentleman from Greene-when they were verifying roll-calls. No one ever knew where he boarded. The herd book gave him a paragraph, saying that he had been born in Indiana along in '37, and moved to this state sometime in the fifties. Left an orphan early, with no education, he had been a day laborer all his life, working at anything he could get, mostly on farms. He never had held office before, and none knew how he broke into the legislature-the tidal wave, I suppose. Every one knew he never would come back again.

"Well, we got down to the last night of the session. The hands of the clock had been turned back in they went everywhere, out to Oak that vain old attempt to stay the re-Ridge to see Lincoln's tomb, over to morseless hours, but its pale and im- Eighth Street to visit his old homepassive face was impotent as a grave- stead, up to the Geological Museum stone to stay dissolution and oblivica.

he would love such a moment-and it was his last chance that session. He stood there quietly a whole minute, and then putting a foot forward, said in his great bass voice: "'Mistah Speakah.' "Old 'Zeke rose and said:

"'Mister Doorkeeper'

I heard Bill Hill call:

"'Mistah Speakah.'

"At the sound of that voice the up-

roar in the chamber ceased. It be-

came so still that the silence tingled

like a numbness through the body;

stiller than it had been any time since

nine o'clock that morning, when they

had paused for the chaplain to say

his prayer. The gang turned around

and stood motionless, panting, in its

"'A message from the senate, by its secretary.'

"'A message from the senate by its cretary,' repeated 'Zeke, and then Bill had to give way to Sam Pollard, who stepped forth and said:

"'Mr. Speaker, I am directed to inform the house that the senate has passed senate bill No. 106'-I never shall forget the number of that bill, after all the sleepless nights it caused me, and the anxious mornings scanning the calendar to see if its black figures were there-'Senate bill No. 106. A bill for an act to amend an act entitled: An Act concerning the exercise of the right of eminent domain, notwithstanding the objections of the governor'-you know the lingo.

Then, as the speaker said. 'The clerk will read the message,' Hen Harvey, who was clerk of the house, stretched his arm over the narrow desk and took the file from the page. The old man was mad when he wrote that veto message, and he gave both houses the devil. I never knew the legislature to get such an unmerciful lamming in my life; it was outrageous, for it was a good bill, and-"

"Ought ter pass," interjected Jennings, repeating the trite phrase sententiously.

"But nobody heard it, for when Hen began to read, the gang took a deep breath and began to howl. From both sides of the chamber broke forth a clamor of 'Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker,' until in the din even these words were lost, and there was just that long, heavy roar. The boys came over from the senate, for they had done their duty and had done it nobly, in the face of a great storm of criticism, combined with the abuse of the Chicago papers, and they wanted to help lift in the house. And with them came the crowd of reformers from the Municipal League, and stood about with George Herrick, the old man's private secretary. The reformers, as

There was a heavier roar of noes, and then came the old cry: 'Ayes and noes, ayes and noes, Mr. Speaker, ayes and noes, damn you, don't you dare shut off debate!' But 'Zeke only smiled and his gavel cracked-and they were still. Then in the stillness he said: "'Gentlemen are as familiar with

the rules as is the chair. They are well aware that the chair is powerless to order a roll call after a viva voce vote, unless he is in doubt as to the result, the demand for the yeas and nays not having been preferred before the question had been put to the house. In this instance'-and the splendid old fellow swung his gavel to his ear, and the smile flickered out of his face-'in this instance the chair is not in doubt. The ayes seem to have it, the ayes have it, and the main question is ordered.'

"'The question is: Shall the house concur with the senate in the passage of senate bill No. 106, notwithstanding the objections of the governor. Upon this question those in favor of the bill will vote aye, and those opposed will vote no, when their names are called, and the clerk will call the roll.' The gavel fell, and the speaker, holding it where it had fallen, leaned half his length over his desk, and motioned to Hen Harvey. Hen had taken off his coat and vest and collar-he would call that roll himself-and as he unbuttoned his cuffs, inclining his head toward the speaker, 'Zeke yelled in his

"'Now, Hen, damn it, call that roll to beat all hell.'

"Then we knew that the Bailey bill fight was on to a finish. We had had our first big battle with the reformers, and were down together in the last ditch. Whenever a bill with something in it is about to pass the legislature, a strange quality steals into the atmosphere, just as there does in the council chamber in Chicago when anything is to be pulled off-don't you know? There is a forebodement, an apprehensiveness, that electrifies the nerves and oppresses the lungs. I felt it there that night. We had had a heavy fight to pass the bill in the first place, and now we had to override a [Continued an page 7, Col. 1]



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