

THE VINDICATION OF HENDERSON OF GREENE.

(Continued from page 6, Col. 4)

veto! It's hard enough to get the seventy-seven votes that constitute a majority, with the people against you—men are such cowards—but when it comes to rounding up two-thirds—a hundred and two—it's an entirely different problem. We had been working quietly at the thing for days, for we knew the veto was coming, and that the old man would wait until the last night to send it in. We had a hundred and one tried and true men who would stick to the end. The hundred and second was Jim Berry. We had his promise, and believed he would stay in line—though he was afraid of his constituents—for he was poor and in debt.

"Judge Hardin came and sat beside me that we might check them off for ourselves, and Hen began calling the roll:

"Allen!"
"Aye!"
"Ambaugh!"
"Aye!"
"Anderson!"
"Aye!"
"Berry!"
"Aye!"

"The leaders, Jamison over on the Republican side, and Riley on the Democratic, sat at their desks, with roll calls, at which they thoughtfully blew the smoke of their cigars as they checked the progress of the vote.

"Bell!"
"Aye!"
"Berry!"
"Bel!"
"Berry!"
"Berry!"

"There was no reply."
"Berry!"

"There was no reply."
"Berry!"

"Hen looked at Berry, and the peltroom sat there with his eyes cast down, rolling his cigar around and around in his mouth, tearing up his little flakes of paper, and swinging from side to side in his chair. Then Hen called the next name:

"Briggs!"

"No!" he voted, and Berry looked up for the first time since the bill had come over from the senate.

"Zeke rapped fiercely with his gavel, and Hen paused. Then Zeke said sharply:

"The chair is compelled again to call the attention of gentlemen to rule three, which prohibits smoking in the hall of the house. The chair dislikes to be compelled to repeat this admonition so frequently, and trusts that gentlemen will observe the injunction without additional suggestion. The clerk will proceed with the calling of the roll." And he smashed the broken sounding board again with his gavel. We needed time. Some of the members laughed, but that only gave Zeke a chance to gain more time by rapping for order. We feared the effect, however, on discipline. Then he called Brisbane, one of our fellows, and he didn't vote. I grew uneasy, and Judge Hardin was squirming there beside me on the lounge. When I thought of Berry I grew mad, and wondered if we could save the bill without him. At that instant my eye happened to light upon Henderson of Greene. He was standing under the gallery just as he had been standing all evening. He seemed not to have moved. He had his hands clasped awkwardly behind him, and was chewing his tobacco contemplatively. And here was my chance! I thought of the pathetic biography in the house directory. I thought of his wife as I had seen the poor old thing going around town with him the week before. I thought of the way he had worked and toiled for her and all those children, and how little life held for him. If I could get him for the bill in Berry's place, the Chicago people, I knew, would be liberal with him, and he could go back home better off in a financial way than when he came. And so I motioned to Burke, and when he came up I told him to ask the gentleman from Greene to meet me at once in the speaker's room, and I retired to await him. Presently, in his clumsy way, he shuffled in. He came close up to me, and when I had given the poor devil a cigar he bent over to hear what I might say. I asked him how he was going to vote on the bill, and he said he thought he would vote against it, inasmuch as the governor had said it was a bad piece of legislation. Well, there was no time to discuss that phase of the question.

"Look here, comrade," I said, "this is a bill that concerns Chicago alone—it does not affect and cannot affect your constituents one way or the other, can it?"

"No," he said; 'reckon not.'

"They don't even know down in Greene county that there is such a bill, do they?"

"Reckon not," he said, 'leastways I hain't heard any one say nothin' 'bout it.'

"Of course you haven't," I said, 'and what's more, you never will. Now, see here, I said, 'I'll be quite frank with you, for I like you—he cast a strange, sidling glance at me, dis-

trustful, like all farmers—for I like you,' I said, 'and I want to do something for you. The men who are promoting this legislation have exactly enough votes to pass it over the governor's veto, and it's going to pass. On this ballot they will have just ninety-one votes—one of them men will vote against it to move a reconsideration if necessary, and about ten will not vote. When the absentees are called, these ten will vote for the bill, and on the verification, you'll see others tumbling into the band-wagon. Now, your vote is not needed, as you see, and cast for the bill or against it, can have no appreciable effect upon the result. The bill will pass without your vote, and cannot defeat it, for the hundred and two will stand firm in the end. One of them, however—it is Berry, I don't mind telling you—is trying, at the last minute, to force us into raising his price. You can take his place, you can have his price of the easy money with his raise added, if you will go out there and vote for the bill.'

"He stood looking at the floor, ruminating.

"I know, Henderson," I continued, "that you are a poor man, that you have a large family, that you have to work hard for a living. You are going home tomorrow, maybe not to come back here any more, and you can go, if you wish, with three thousand dollars clean, cold cash in your pocket. What do you say?"

"The old man turned his face away and began to fumble with his horny fingers at his chin. His hand trembled as with a palsy. We could hear the roll call going on outside.

"Hear them?" I said. "It's nearly up to you—what do you say?"

"The old man's lips quivered, and his calloused fingers grated in his beard. He opened his lips to speak, but his jaw moved helplessly. And we heard Hen's voice back there in the house calling—calling so that you could have heard him over in the Le-lan-d barroom:

"Gelsbach!"
"Ye!"

"He is one of those who will change," I said.

"Giger!"

"There was no response. 'He'll be all right when they call the absentees,' I said.

"Gordon!"

"No!"

"Griesheimer!"

"Aye!"

"Hear them?" I asked. The H's came next, and the old man, still fumbling with his chin, and without turning his head, began to talk:

"Baldwin," he said, 'you're right. I am a poor man. I have a wife an' eight children. Tomorrow I'm goin' back home, an' on Monday I'm goin' to hunt a job—hunt a job in the harvest field. I've worked all my life. I'll keep on huntin' jobs in the harvest fields. I'll probably die in the poor-house. I'll be buried in the potter's field. God knows what'll become of that woman and them children.'

"He nodded his head as in assent to an indisputable proposition, and his eyes widened as if in fright. They were looking down the barren years before him, and I felt in that moment glad of my power to brighten them.

"Hallen!" we heard Hen call.

"No!"

"Henderson of Effingham."

"Aye!"

"The old man straightened out his long, lank figure, and then suddenly he turned and looked me in the eyes.

"But Baldwin," he said, 'I come here last January an honest man, and to-morrow I'm goin' back, back to o' Greene, back to my people, back to that woman an' them children, an' Baldwin—he gulped the word—'Baldwin, I'm goin' back an honest man.'

"Henderson of Greene!" Hen's voice called, and the old man stalked into the corridor and thumped 'No!' in a trumpet note.

The lobbyist ceased. The train had stopped at Chenoa, and they could hear the breathing of the engine, breathing as a living thing when it rests. The noise ceased presently, and the silence of the wide country night ensued. They heard only the notes that came from the throats of frogs and the strident drumming of the cicadae. Baldwin looked at the two politicians, expecting some comment. The occultant Healy looked out of the window, into the vast darkness brooding over the prairie town. Jennings sat meditatively pulling at his moist mustache, an expression of perplexity in his countenance, the wrinkles of increasing concentration of mind gathering in his brow. Presently, without a word, he rose and left the compartment. When he returned he was treading in his stockings, his coat and waistcoat and collar had been removed, his suspenders were hanging at his hips. He was evidently preparing for his berth. Baldwin, meanwhile, had pressed a button, and sent Gentry, the aged porter, now in white jacket, for his bag, and laid out on the seat beside him his pajamas, and a traveler's case filled with silver toilet articles. Jennings lifted his own big valise to his knees, and from its depths drew a bottle, wrapped heavily in a newspaper. He held one of the heavy little glasses under the faucet of the water-cooler, and allowed the water to trickle into it. Then peeling back the paper from his bottle, he took a long pull from its naked neck, and passed it to Baldwin. As he did so, his brows still knotted in perplexity, he asked:

"What'd you say that feller's name was?"

"Henderson."

"Henderson of Greene, eh?"

"Yes."

"Jennings threw back his head and tilted the water, deadly cold from the ice and tasting of smoke, into his

throat, and when he rinsed his mouth, he said, with the happy expression of a man who has resolved a doubt: "Oah, yes, John Henderson of Greene. He lived out at Rabb's Corner. Yes, that's him; the governor y'nted him public administrator of Greene county right after that session."

British Cows Which Eat Fish. Dried coalfish, unsalted, is eaten by the inhabitants of the Faroe Islands (between Shetland and Iceland) or their cows, says a consular report. The fish, which is of the cod type, is considered good for cows, as it enables them, it is stated, to yield an ample supply of rich milk. The dried fish is not cooked before being eaten; it is merely laid on stones and then pounded with stones or hammers.

Time Saved. In a large family, where there are many children, much loss of time and annoyance is saved if, before putting stockings into the wash each week, each person will tack the two stockings of each pair at the heels, says Suburban Life. There is no trouble in trying to mate them afterward, as each person may use a different colored thread.

Make Little of Life's Ills. To be poor is not always pleasant, but worse things than that happen at sea. Small shoes are apt to pinch, but not if you have a small foot; if we have little means it will be well to have little desires. Poverty is no shame, but being discontented with it is.—Charles H. Spurgeon.

Fatal. A Hutchinson man announces the discovery that pouring scalding water on chinch bugs will destroy them. Tom Cordrey inquires if the man has experimented by placing the chinch bug on an anvil and hitting it with a 40-pound hammer.—Kansas City Times.

Should Have Been Prepared. Old Father Epicuremus, the philosopher, has just sent us a telegram stating that "some men's idea of earning a living is just answering a dinner bell." We should have welcomed the communication had the old gentleman not sent his message collect.—Judge.

The Difference. Bings—"I see a woman has been cured of rheumatism by a stroke of lightning." Jings—"Yes. And the case differs from so many surgical operations announced as perfectly successful in that the patient is still alive."—Judge.

The Current Craze. "A great many old plays are being fitted out with alleged melodies and sent out as operettas." "That's right. But they're going too far. I know of one actress who is going to star in a musical version of the multiplication table."

Somewhat Contradictory. In America, says the Louisville Courier-Journal, a school teacher works, upon the average, for about half as much as a bricklayer, and has to tell the boys that education is a necessity if they would get on in life.

From His Point of View. "Stop that! Hands off! How do you know I'm the passenger that stepped on your foot?" "I don't know it absolutely, but (biff) I'm giving you (biff) the benefit of the (biff) bang!) doubt."

Fine for Two. "Did you ever tell that young man that late hours were bad for one?" asked father at the breakfast table. "Well, father," replied the wise daughter, "late hours may be bad for one, but they're all right for two."

His Change in Belief. "Do you believe that all men are created equal?" "I used to before I was married." "And now?" "Now I find that I can't begin to compare with other women's husbands."—Detroit Free Press.

Aspen Best Wood for Matches. Aspen wood is used almost exclusively in the manufacture of matches in Sweden, as it is easily cut and porous enough to be easily impregnated with sulphur or paraffin.

Their Final Chance. He—What kind of a resort was it you were at? She—Well, judging from the kind of men I saw there, I should say it was the last resort for marriageable girls.

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