

CALEB CONOVER RAILROADER



A STORY OF LOVE, POLITICS, INTRIGUE,
OF A RICH & POWERFUL BOSS
& AN INTREPID YOUNG
REFORMER.
BY ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE.
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"I understand," answered Caino. "Print, as usual, a 'spread' on the windy, blundering speeches, and forget to report the others. Same as when—"

"Sure. And pass the 'press-gag' sign up-State, too. Standish is certain to make a tour. Beiser," turning to the portly State Chairman, "I want the county caucuses two weeks from Saturday. I've an idea we can work the same old 'snap' move in more'n half of them. Pass it on to the county chairman to treble last year's floaters and, to work the 'back door' the way we did in Bowden County in '97. They understand their business pretty well, most of 'em. And I'll have Shevlin and Hourke jack up those that don't, and learn 'em their little lines. Two weeks from Saturday, then. That's understood? It'll give us all the time we need, if we hustle. Never mind the other State or city candidates or Congressmen. Those jobs'll take care of themselves. If the wrong men get into the Assembly or Congress, they'll get licked into shape quick enough. We're all right there. I want the whole shove to be made on the Governorship this year. Pass it on! Baltazzi, I hear those dagoes of yours are grouching again. What's—"



"Beiser, I want the county caucuses two weeks from Saturday."

"They say they don't get nothin'." They say all the good jobs goes to the Irish or Dutch or even Americans, and—

"Promise 'em something, then."

"I have. But—"

"Then promise 'em something more. Don't be stingy. If that don't satisfy 'em, give me the tip, and I'll have a ten per cent. drop ordered on the foreign section gangs' pay, and make Chief Geoghegan pass the word to his cops to make things bad for the pushcart men and organ grinders, and close up the dago saloons an hour early. That'll bring 'em in a-running. How 'bout litterchoor, Abbott?"

"I'll start the staff to work on songs to-night," said a long-haired little man, "and get out a bunch of 'Friend of the Plain People' tracts and—"

"Won't do! 'Man-of-Experience-and-Benefactor-of-the-State or Ignorant-Meddling-Boy-Reformer. Which-Will-You-Vote-For?' That's the racket this time. Guy the whole League crowd. 'Silk Stockings vs. Laboring Man.' That's the idea. Get the cartoonists at work on pictures like Standish making the police sprinkle the streets with Florida water while thugs break into houses, and that sort of thing. 'What-We-May-Expect-from-Civic-League-Rule.' Understand? Say, Caino, detail one or two of your men, of course, to look up Standish's past performances in private life, too. Anything about booze or the cards or any sort of scrape will work up fine just now. The gag's old, but about a reformer it always makes a hit. Even a bit of a stretch goes. I'll stand a libel suit or two if it comes to a show-down."

"How about the out-of-town papers?" queried Caino. "Our regular chain are all right. But the rest—"

"The C. G. & X. owns the Mountain State, don't it? And it controls ninety per cent. of the mileage of the other roads that run through the State. And wherever there's towns big enough for a paper there's a railroad somewhere near. And wherever there's an editor he wants his passes, don't he? And a rebate on his freight? 'Well—don't you lose sleep over the 'press-tag.'"

"How about floaters?" asked Bourke. "Same rule and same price?"

"Yes. Subject to change if we're pressed. Aldermen all right, I s'pose?"

"Haven't had a chance to sound 'em since you declared yourself," said the president of that body, "but all except Fowler and Brayle are your own crowd and—"

"Tell Fowler the C. G. & X. will give him a firm tip on the price for the next 'sealed-bid' contract for railroad ties. Give Brayle a hint about that indictment against his brother. It was pigeonholed, but if I tried real hard, I might induce the District Attorney to look for it. I tell you, went on Conover, raising his voice

for the first time, and glaring about the table, "every mother's son, from engine-oller to Congressman, has got to get down to the job and hustle as he never did before. And I've got the means of finding out who hustles and who shirks. And I've got the means of paying both kinds. And I guess there isn't anyone that doubts I can do it. Pass that on too. Caleb Conover for Governor, and to hell with reform!"

CHAPTER VI.

A Meeting and An Interruption.

By this time the campaign was on in sober earnest. Conover, who kept as well posted on his foe's movements as though the League itself sent him hourly reports, grew vaguely annoyed as, from day to day, he learned the headway Standish was making in Granite. The better classes, almost to a man, flocked to Clive's standard. By a series of fiery speeches he succeeded in rousing a certain hitherto dormant enthusiasm among the business men of the town. They found to their surprise that he was neither a visionary nor a mere agitator; that he based his plans not on some Utopian Altruism of high-souled commonwealth but on a practical basis of clean government.

He pointed out to them how utterly the Machine ran the Mountain State; how the railroads and the vested interests of the party clique sent their own representatives to the Legislature, and then made them grant fraudulent franchise after fraudulent franchise to the men who sent them there. How the taxes were raised and so distributed that the brunt fell upon the people who least profited by the State expenditures and by the legalized wholesale robberies. How, in fact, the populace of Granite and of the whole Mountain State were being ridden at will by a handful of unscrupulous men.

That Caleb Conover was the head and front of the clique referred to everyone was well aware, yet Standish studiously avoided all mention of his name, all personal vituperation. Whereat Caleb Conover wondered mightily. Stenographic reports of Clive's speeches and of the increasingly large and enthusiastic meetings he addressed were carefully coned by the Railroaders. And the tolerant grin with which he read the first of these reports changed gradually to a scowl as time went on.

He had made no effort to suppress or in any way to molest these early meetings. He wanted to try out his young opponent's strength, gauge his following and his methods. But when, to his growing astonishment, he found Clive was actually winning a respectable, ever larger, hearing in his home town, he decided it was high time to call a halt. Accordingly he summoned Billy Shevlin.

"What's doing?" he asked curtly, as he received his henchman in the Mausoleum study.

"To-night's the big rally at Snyder's Opera House, you know," replied Billy. "Standish's booked to make his star speech before he starts on his State tour. He's got a team of Good Government geezers from Boston to do a spiel, and he's callin' this the biggest scream of the campaign so far. Say, that young feller's makin' an awful lot of noise, Boss. When are you goin' to give us the office to put the combination on his mouth? On the level, he ain't doin' you no good. The Silk Socks is with him already, and he's winner with the business bunch in family groups."

"Look here," said Caleb, pointing out of the study's north window, which commanded a view of exclusive Pompton Avenue and its almost equally fashionable cross streets, "how would you figure up the population of that district?"

"The Silk-Socks? You know's well as me. Thirty-eight hundred in round numbers."

"And over there?" pointing east.

"The business district? An easy 12,000."

"Say 16,000 in both. S'pose they are all for young Standish. Now look here."

He crossed the long room and ran up the shade of one of the south windows. The great marble house stood on the edge of a hill-crest, overlooking a distant vista of mean, winding streets, dirty, interminable rows of tenements, factories and small shops. Through the centre, like a huge snake, the tracks of the C. G. & X. wound their way, and over all a smeared pall of reek and coal smoke brooded like some vast bird of prey. Coal yards, docks, freight houses, elevators, shanties—and once more that interminable sea of dingy, squalid domiciles.

"What's the population down there, Billy?"

"Hundred'n ten thousand, six hundred an'—"

"An' every soul of them sold for you, Boss sixteen thousand to hundred'n-ten-thous—"

"That's right. So long as the youngsters content to speak his little piece here in Granite, I've stood by

and let him talk. It would be time enough to put in a spoke when he started across country. But this blowout to-night is different. The stories of it will get in the Boston and Philadelphia and New York papers. So—"

"Well?"

"So there won't be any meeting?"

"If you say so, it goes. Will I give the boys the office to rough-house the joint?"



"Will I give the boys the office to rough-house the joint?"

"And have every out-of-State paper screeching about ring rule and roydism? Billy, you must have been born more ignorant than most. You never could have picked up all you don't know, in the little time you've lived."

Shevlin looked duly abashed and awaited further orders.

"I hear the gas main that serves Snyder's Opera House isn't in very good order," resumed the Boss. "I shouldn't wonder if all the lights went out just as the meeting opens to-night. That'll mean a lot of confusion. And my friend, Chief Geoghegan, being a careful man, will disperse the crowd to prevent a riot, and to keep pickpockets from molesting those pure patriots. I want you to see Geoghegan and the gas company about it, right away. But look here, there mustn't be any rough-house or disorder. Tell the boys to keep away. I'll have work enough for them to do when Standish takes the road."

Billy Shevlin, a great light of joy in his little beady eyes, departed on his mission, while Caleb, summoning Anice Lanier, set about his daily task of dictation.

"Have you kept your eye much on Jerry lately?" said Conover, suddenly stopping, to his stenographer.

"No, why?"

"That young ass has got something on the thing he calls his mind, and I've a good notion the 'Something' is a scheme to get even with me. I just judge that from what I know of him. He gets his morning letter from that chorus missus of his, and then he sits and rolls his eyes at me for half an hour. He's framing up something all right, all right. What it is, I don't know. That's the advantage a fool has over a wise man! You can dope out some line of action on a man of brains, but the Almighty Himself don't know what a fool'll do next. So I'm kind of riding herd on Jerry from afar."

"Perhaps if you tried a new tack—took him into your confidence—"

"There wouldn't be any confidence left. No man's got enough for two. Sometimes I'm shy on even the little I once had."

"The campaign?"

"The campaign? That ain't a question of confidence any more than knowing the sun will rise and Mis-souri will go Democratic. I was thinking of the confidence I had of winning the Pompton Avenue crowd by that measly reception."

"You haven't succeeded?"

"Not so's you'd notice it. A few of the people who are so tangled up in my deals that they are scared not to be civil, not sort of sheepish at me when I meet 'em. The rest get near-sighted as soon as I come round the corner. As for calling on us or inviting me to any of their houses, why you'd think I was the Voice of Conscience by the way they sidestep me."

"But the season hasn't really opened. In most cities people aren't even back from the seaside or mountains yet. Perhaps, later on—"

"Later on the present performance will be echoed by popular request. Say, Miss Lanier, I was half jagg'd that night. But I can remember telling you that I was happier just then than I'd ever been before. I was in society at last. My boy was a member of the smart set in New York. My girl was a princess. I was going to be Governor."

"Yes?"

"Well, look at me now. Jerry's made a lifelong mess of his future. Blanche is on the way to Yurppur with a bargain-counter prince that I'd hate to compliment by calling deuce-high. My debut into society was like the feller in the song, who 'Walked Right In and Turned Around and Walked Right Out Again.' The Governorship's the only thing left; and I'm getting so I'm putting into that all the hopes I squandered on the rest. And when I've nalled it, I've a half mind to try for President. That'd carry me clear through society, and on out on the other side."

(To Be Continued.)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION SUBMITTED TO THE CITIZENS OF THIS COMMONWEALTH FOR THEIR APPROVAL OR REJECTION, BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AND PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH, IN PURSUANCE OF ARTICLE XVIII OF THE CONSTITUTION.

Number One.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to section twenty-six of article five of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Resolved (if the Senate concur), That the following amendment to section twenty-six of article five of the Constitution of Pennsylvania be, and the same is hereby, proposed, in accordance with the eighteenth article thereof:

That section 26 of Article V, which reads as follows: "Section 26. All laws relating to courts shall be general and of uniform operation, and the organization, jurisdiction, and powers of all courts of the same class or grade, so far as regulated by law, and the process and judgments of such courts, shall be uniform; and the General Assembly is hereby prohibited from creating other courts to exercise the powers vested by this Constitution in the judges of the courts of Common Pleas and Orphans' Courts," be amended so that the same shall read as follows:—

Section 26. All laws relating to courts shall be general and of uniform operation, and the organization, jurisdiction, and powers of all courts of the same class or grade, so far as regulated by law, and the force and effect of the process and judgments of such courts, shall be uniform; but, notwithstanding any provisions of this Constitution, the General Assembly shall have full power to establish new courts, from time to time, as the same may be needed in any city or county, and to prescribe the powers and jurisdiction thereof, and to increase the number of Judges in any courts now existing or hereafter created, or to reorganize the same, or to vest in other courts the jurisdiction theretofore exercised by courts not of record, and to abolish the same wherever it may be deemed necessary for the orderly and efficient administration of justice.

A true copy of Resolution No. 1.
ROBERT McAFEE,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Number Two.

RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, so as to eliminate the requirement of payment of taxes as a qualification of the right to vote.

Resolved (if the House of Representatives concur), That the following amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania be, and the same is hereby, proposed, in accordance with the eighteenth article thereof:

That section six of article five be amended, by striking out the said section, and inserting in place thereof the following:

Section 6. In the county of Philadelphia, and in the county of Allegheny, the several courts of common pleas shall be organized, and the powers now vested in the district courts of common pleas, subject to such changes as may be made by this Constitution or by law, shall be in Philadelphia vested in five distinct and separate courts of equal and co-ordinate jurisdiction, composed of the number designated in the following article:

That section six of article five be amended, by striking out the said section, and inserting in place thereof the following:

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city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, except as herein provided, shall never exceed seven per centum upon the assessed value of the taxable property therein, nor shall any such municipality or district incur any new debt, or increase its indebtedness to an amount exceeding five per centum upon such assessed valuation of property, without the assent of the electors thereof at a public election in such manner as shall be provided by law; but any city, the debt of which now exceeds seven per centum of such assessed valuation, may be authorized by law to increase the same three per centum, in the aggregate, at any one time, upon such valuation," so as to read as follows:—

Section 8. The debt of any county, city, borough, township, school district, or other municipality or incorporated district, except as herein provided, shall never exceed seven per centum upon the assessed value of the taxable property therein, nor shall any such municipality or district incur any new debt, or increase its indebtedness to an amount exceeding five per centum upon such assessed valuation of property, without the assent of the electors thereof at a public election in such manner as shall be provided by law; but any city, the debt of which now exceeds seven per centum of such assessed valuation, may be authorized by law to increase the same three per centum, in the aggregate, at any one time, upon such valuation, except that any debt or debts hereinafter incurred by the city and county of Philadelphia for the construction and development of subways for transit purposes, or for the construction of wharves and docks, or the reclamation of land to be used in the construction of a system of wharves and docks, as public improvements, owned or to be owned by said city and county of Philadelphia, and which shall yield to the city and county of Philadelphia current net revenue in excess of the interest on said debt or debts and of the annual installments necessary for the cancellation of said debt or debts, may be excluded in ascertaining the power of the city and county of Philadelphia to become otherwise indebted. Provided, That a sinking fund for their cancellation shall be established and maintained.

A true copy of Joint Resolution No. 4.
ROBERT McAFEE,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

LAFOLLETTE WINS