

HIS RISE TO POWER

By Henry Russell Miller,
Author of
"The Man Higher Up"

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"I'd like to very much. But," he answered simply, "I'm afraid it will be a long, long time before I can afford it."

She turned and surveyed him thoughtfully. "Now, I like that—the way you said it, I mean. You speak of it in such a matter of fact way, as though the lack or possession of money were really of no great importance to you."

"It slipped out," he confessed. "I don't like to seem to pose. I make enough for my immediate needs, of course, and some day I expect to have more—though not wealth as you probably measure it."

"I'm not sure whether it is really important to me. I do not like the things it buys. But even more I like to think of the power it represents. It's that and the game of getting it that makes men want money in large quantities. Don't you think so?"

He remembered certain rumors he had heard concerning Stephen Hampden's rise to wealth and he put a guard upon his lips.

"I don't know much about it, I fear," which was entirely true. "After college I went to law school, then settled here. The family name and father's being a judge helped me to a quick start, I suppose. Since then I have done about as well as the average young lawyer in a small town. That is all. It is very commonplace."

"That doesn't explain why you are wanted by a whole county. It's your chance to escape the commonplace, isn't it? Popularity means power and power is splendid always—I'm primitive, you see. I would use it, revel in it, make it lift me into the high places. Dad says every one believes you have a big future. Which is good evidence that you have a big future, isn't it?"

"The wisdom of twenty-three!" he laughed.

"Oh, you won't take me seriously? Dad says I have the most intrusively



Together They Went Slowly Down into the Valley.

executive mind he ever met. He is very nice about it. He often asks me what I think of things and men—

"And then forms his own opinions?"

"That," she sighed, "is the disappointing fact."

"Did you plan that?" He pointed to a grove of trees on the crest of East ridge, through which gleamed the white stucco walls of that palatial residence so frequently mentioned in the Globe.

"Yes. Do you like it?"

"I haven't seen it except at a distance. But why in New Chelsea?"

"Why not?" she argued, with spirit. "Aren't our hills as beautiful as the Berkshires and the air as fine? Why shouldn't we enjoy the place the money comes from? Dad says a lot of money is to come from this valley in the next few years."

His face became suddenly grave. Thinking of her last words, he looked down at the quaint, old fashioned, drowsing town that lay at the foot of the knob. Far away across the hills hovered a perennial cloud, smoke of Plumville's mills. Already it was being whispered that the sudden return of the captain of finance, the building of the big house with its air of permanence, were not without commercial significance. John was a young man given to sentiment.

"I was thinking of New Chelsea," he said dryly. "So the old order changeth. The world of fashion and finance comes a-knocking at our door. Our peaceful valley is to be exploited."

"Can't you see the world moving—

and New Chelsea with it?"

He was not looking at the shadow, but at her, silhouetted against the sky, strong with the strength of women whose fathers have toiled close to the soil, eager, palpitating with life, for life. He wondered curiously what manner of woman she was, what lay under the precocious hardness that could see only the picturesque in a ramshackle, poverty stricken Italian village and could dismiss with a care less laugh the fate of a chick in a hawk's clutches.

The line of shadow passed the summit of East ridge. The valley lay in twilight. They watched until the sun sank.

"Shall we go down?"

Together they went slowly down into the valley and its twilight to her home.

"We have now seen," she said, "a sunrise and a sunset together."

"And the evening and the morning were the first day," he quoted smilingly.

"I wonder what the next day holds."

"Aunt Roberta," he laughed, "hopes that I'll fall in love with you."

"How perfectly absurd! Although it might redress the balance, unless," she added demurely, "I should suffer a return of my youthful malady."

"Which would be doubly absurd. It's like chickenpox. Having had one attack, you are thereafter immune."

They laughed gayly.

On the terrace little tables were set and John renewed his acquaintance with Stephen Hampden, a short, stocky, pleasant voiced man, who in no way resembled the marauding pirate that rumor had him. Also with Mrs. Hampden, a lady who tolled not nor spun, but was always tired and talked in a languid, honeyed voice. There were also Warren Blake, solemn and handsome, and his mother, a shy, faded old woman, frightened in the presence of "society folk," and not altogether happy in the Sunday splendor of best black silk and bonnet. Mrs. Hampden said Newport would be deprived of the Hampdens' presence that summer, because she had the new house to open and, moreover, preferred to remain with her husband, who had important business matters to oversee.

"She means," Katherine whispered, "that dad caught a tartar in Wall street."

Later the Blakes rose to leave. Warren with surprising tact covering the awkwardness of his mother's farewells, and then, unostentatiously getting, escorting her away.

Hampden caught his wife yawning daintily. "Well, Maria, since you're so tired, we might as well go in and leave these young people to themselves. The chaperon has no standing in New Chelsea."

After a languid good night to John Mrs. Hampden went, with an air of utter weariness, into the house.

Hampden, however, for the space of one cigar, remained on the terrace, chatting pleasantly, during which time John discovered that even Steve Hampden, hard driver of men and daring speculator, had a very likable side and took a mighty pride in his daughter. When the cigar had been tossed away Hampden rose, shaking hands cordially with John.

"I'd better take my own advice. I have to work tomorrow, but don't you miss this fairy night. Come around often, John. And don't let this girl flirt the head from your shoulders."

"I'm already fearful for my peace of mind," John laughed. "But I shall come often, thank you."

It would be evidence of an officious surveillance to set down here just how often John Dunmeade journeyed to the ugly house behind the hedge. It was not, however, thanks to the duties of his candidacy, as often as he would have liked.

But there were other matters demanding the attention of John Dunmeade, nominee for the office of district attorney by grace of the bosses' choice. For he saw an army, whose discipline and weapons and effectiveness caused him to wonder, go forth to war. Not with pomp and panoply—that was to come later. This was the time for scout and reconnaissance, for the drawing of maps, the seizing of strategic positions and for numbering the enemy. The enemy—the people—John perceived, made no counter preparations, did not even see the necessity.

Jeremy Applegate one day gave John a new point of view. Jeremy was an old soldier, a cripple, and a clerk in the recorder's office.

"I'm almighty glad," said Jeremy, "that for once I've got to work for a man I got some respect for. I'm a pretty specimen of citizen, ain't I?" he exclaimed bitterly. "I got a job. Why've I got it—because I'm fit for it? Guess you lawyers that have to read my kinky handwrite know better'n that. It's because I'm an old soldier and a pegleg and the kind of shrimp that'll go round whinnin' to his friends about his job so's to get them to vote the ticket. Yessir, I'm that kind. I fit for my country all right, but I did it because it was my duty, not so's to be able to get a job and beg for votes afterward. I was a man then. Now I'm a parasite. For nigh onto twenty years I've done it, because I can't make a livin' any other way, for good men and bad men, for them I can respect—mostly for them I can't respect. I ain't allowed a mind of my own nor a conscience, and every time I go campaignin' I feel like a pup. Do you know what it is? It's hell, that's what it is."

"What we need," said John, "is civil service."

"Civil service! They've got civil service in the postoffice. Did you ever hear of a postmaster or his clerk that

wasn't in politics?"

But a grumbling soldier often is a good fighter; witness Jeremy on a scouting expedition. It begins at the establishment of Silas Hicks, Ivoryman. Jeremy, being a pegleg, cannot tramp the weary miles ahead of him.

He drives out into the country, brow wrinkled as he marshals his arguments. He has no eyes for the calm beauty of the afternoon. He pulls in the jogging horse beside a field in the middle of which a man is seen driving a hayrake. In response to Jeremy's hail the man descends from his seat and walks slowly over to the fence.

"Howdy, comrade," says Jeremy.

"Howdy, Jeremy."

"Good harvestin' weather."

"Purty good," comrade agrees. There is not a cloud in the sky.

"Smoke?" suggests Jeremy. From a bulging pocket he draws forth a cigar circled by a gaudy red and gold band. They are very good cigars, costing \$10 the hundred. At home repose three boxes of them, recently purchased. Jeremy has needed a new suit and his wife a new dress for more than a year. These luxuries, however, must be postponed.

The farmer holds the cigar to his nose, sniffing approvingly. "I'll keep it till after supper." He deposits it carefully on the bottom rail of the fence beside his water jug.

Jeremy resorts again to the bulging pocket. "Keep that and smoke this now," he offers generously. The farmer lights the cigar. From another pocket Jeremy draws forth his own weed. This pocket is not so well filled and contains only "three fers" for Jeremy's own consumption.

After further preliminaries Jeremy opens fire.

"S'pose you're goin' to git into line this fall, same as ever, comrade?" he remarks casually.

The farmer leans on the fence in an attitude suited to comfortable argument. "Well, I don't know's I am."

"With Johnny Dunmeade on the ticket?"

"I'll vote for him. He's all right. Does my law work. I don't think much of the state ticket, though."

Forthwith Jeremy launches into a passionate defense of his party, in which the tariff is freely mentioned. Reference is made also to the days when comrade and he shared blankets together on the red soil of Virginia. He talks rapidly, dreading to hear the argument which he cannot answer. Comrade is not unimpressed, but is far from conviction.

"Well, I don't know," he says slowly. And then brings forth the thing that has been haunting Jeremy's nights and days. "I'm bothered some about that trust company business. Looks to me as if some of Murchell's politicians was at the bottom of it. When they git to foolin' with our banks, it's time to make a change. If we let 'em go on, how'm I to know that my bank ain't mixed up with 'em?"

There is a silence, while Jeremy braces himself for his duty. "I know, it—it's been botherin' me, too. But," he looks away and tries manfully to keep the whine out of his voice, "I'm askin' you as a favor to me to over look it. They've served notice on me that I've got to bring in my list for the whole ticket or my job goes."

There is another silence, a longer one, while the farmer chews his cigar reflectively.

"Well," he says at last, "I'd like to do ye a favor, Jeremy. I'll think it over."

CHAPTER IV. The Nazarete.

MANY years before there had come to New Chelsea a shepherd to lead the Presbyterian flock and to die, leaving his wife, a shy, plain little woman, and her son, to struggle with the problem of existence. She must have struggled effectively, for New Chelsea bears witness that never was recourse had to its ready charity. Some credit must be given to the son who, when public school days were over, bent himself to the problem; a moon faced lad who blinked incomprehendingly at the teasing and pranks of his former schoolmates. Slow, patient, unobtrusive, of the sort that despite sundry time honored maxims usually finds recognition reluctant, he yet won it quickly.

When those of his generation whose fathers had been able to provide a college education returned on the threshold of manhood to begin life, they found Warren Blake already, in the eyes of his neighbors, a success, assistant cashier of the bank and owner of certain small mortgages, but not at all boastful over it. He continued, even when he became cashier, modestly unaware that he had become a model young man. He was a literal man who took all things seriously, his duty to his bank, his treasurership of the Presbyterian church. He was rarely known to laugh.

After thirty-five years' acquaintance New Chelsea had found no explanation of him. It was admitted that even Judge Dunmeade, who had a liking for sonorous phrases, had fallen with his "triumph of the commonplace virtues." And it continued to choose Warren Blake as treasurer for those organizations requiring such an officer, executor of its last wills and testaments and trustee of its estates, of which trusts he always rendered prompt and exact accounts.

And now, all New Chelsea knew, he and Stephen Hampden were organizing a company of fabulous capitalization to work the coal fields.

One morning in mid July Warren was as usual at his desk. The day had already become hot and stifling.

The clerks at the counter grumbled profanely at the rule, promulgated by Warren, that forbade them to appear costless, and glanced enviously through the plate glass partition at the cashier, very handsome and cool looking in his light gray suit, socks and necktie to match. He was reading, with a slow care that overlooked no syllable, the papers on the desk. When he had read them he arranged them in two neat little piles, which he labeled "Options Granted" and "Options Refused."

As this task was completed Stephen Hampden entered the bank, with a pleasant nod in reply to the clerks' respectful greeting. He made his way into the cashier's office.

"Phew!" he whistled, drawing a chair up to the desk. "It's a hot day, isn't it? Have you the options?"

Warren pushed the two piles of documents toward him. At one Hampden merely glanced; the other, "Options Refused," he opened and read rapidly.

"H-m-m! All Deer township properties. Why won't they sign?"

"They want cash, not stock, for their coal."

"Did you point out to them the prospective value of the stock and the necessity of being all in one company to prevent price cutting and the opportunity to improve the community by opening up a new business?"

"I did. But we're not trying to improve the community; we're trying to make money for ourselves."

"I'm afraid, Warren, you were the wrong man to send after those options."

"I was," said Warren calmly. "I told you so at first. I'm not a clever talker."

"I don't want to tie up any more cash in this than I have to. How would it work to send John Dunmeade after those options? We could make him attorney for us and the company and give him stock. What do you think?"

Warren took several minutes to consider this suggestion. "He can do it if any one can," he said at last. "He is very popular among the farmers. Everybody likes him. I like him, too, though he is always laughing at me."

"Eh? Why does he laugh at you?" Hampden inquired.

"I don't know," answered Warren evenly. "I shall ask him sometime. Shall I send for him?"

"Yes."

Warren opened the door and sent one of his clerks with the message. Then he sat down, staring thoughtfully at the smoke from Hampden's cigar. Hampden took up a pad and pencil and began to make some calculations.

"He won't do it," Warren said suddenly.

"Why not?" Hampden looked up from his penciling.

"He's honest."

"Aren't we honest?" Hampden demanded sharply.

"We're not—sentimental," Warren answered calmly. "He is. We're trying to take advantage—legitimately, of course—of the farmers in a bargain. That's the thing he likes to fight."

"Not at all," Hampden contradicted coldly. "This is a straight business proposition, and I guess he'll not be sentimental when we offer him, say, ten thousand—in stock. We can let him have that much without losing control."

"I don't think he'll take it," Warren insisted without warmth. "And he isn't a fool. He doesn't need money. He's the sort that people take to, whether he has it or not. I'm not like that. I've got to have money to get people's respect. You're that kind too."

"Eh?" Hampden stared, half amused, half angered by Warren's matter of fact explanation. Warren was not in the habit of talking of himself. "Turned philosopher, have you? You'd better stick to banking, where you're at home."

A few minutes later John entered the bank. Hampden greeted him cordially.

Warren listened patiently while the other men used up a few minutes in pleasant preliminaries. They came at last to the purpose of John's summons.

"I suppose you've heard of our coal proposition?" Hampden suggested.

"Yes."

"There will be a good deal of legal work in connection with it."

In a few rapid, terse sentences Hampden outlined his plan of organization. Mindful of Warren's prediction and seeing John's face grow gravely dubious he endeavored to make his explanation quite matter of fact.

"Of course," he concluded, "you're familiar with the details. There is nothing new in the plan."

"We don't know much about high finance in New Chelsea. But I read the papers sometimes. It is almost a classic, I should say," John replied.

"Substantially the plan of all promotions," Hampden agreed.

(Continued in Next Friday's Issue.)

ON HONEYMOON WITHOUT BRIDEGROOM.

A honeymoon trip without the company of her husband was the rather unusual experience of Mrs. Horace L. Keeler, a young bride who arrived Friday from Honolulu on the Sierra.

But a few minutes before the steamer cleared from the island port last Saturday the marriage took place and then with a quick parting kiss the bride stepped aboard of the steamer while her husband stood on the dock and waived adieu.

The husband expects to arrive on the next steamer and will join his bride. Prior to her marriage Mrs. Keeler was Miss Louise Whipple and was employed as a trained nurse in Honolulu. She first met her husband when called upon to nurse him through an attack of appendicitis, and it was not until Miss Whipple said that she was going away that Keeler took heart and popped the question.—San Francisco Chronicle.

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