

# HIS RISE TO POWER

By Henry Russell Miller,

Author of "The Man Higher Up"

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## PROLOGUE.

Redder, here is a live, gripping, absorbing romance of politics—not the politics of a decade ago, but the politics of today. A young American of good fighting blood and hard, fixed ideals sets out to smash the political machine of his state without compromise with evil. The great moment of his life comes when he must sacrifice his clean hands or rain the father of the girl he loves. The creative genius and large power of the author are even more notable than in "The Man Higher Up," Mr. Miller's preceding novel.

## CHAPTER I.

### Mists of the Morning.

It was twilight still in the valley, but over the hills to the west the sky was whitening. A young man sitting by his window turned to see the birth of another day. Throughout the night he had been staring at a vision. But weariness had set no mark upon him. His vision he did not understand, save that for him it spelled opportunity—a chance to put into a drifting, rather ordinary existence, purposeful action, to stretch his muscles, rack his brain and tear his soul in the struggle that is the life of man.

He caught up his rough towel and, stealing quietly out of the house, walked rapidly down the street. When the straggling town lay behind him he broke into a slow trot. At a place where many feet had worn a path across a clover meadow, he turned from the road. The path ended at a clump of bushes on the river bank. Hastily undressing, he plunged into the green depths, from which June had not quite taken the chill of spring. His lithe, strong body responded to the shock. The nerves, harried by the long night watch, relaxed. He shouted lustily. For a few minutes he swam vigorously. Then, reaching the shore, he took the towel and rubbed himself into a glow. He tingled with a sense of well being.

When he was dressed again, refreshed and eager for his day, he took the path back to the highway. The sun was climbing over the hills. He stopped and watched it while it swung clear in the sky, gleaming a fiery red through the mists of the valley. The glory of the morning was complete.

He was about to resume his tramp homeward when he beheld a strange procession advancing along the road, a young woman leading a laughing horse. As she came nearer he chuckled aloud. The handsome pigskin saddle, the ivory handled crop, the modish riding suit and boots were not the equipment with which young ladies of New Chelsea were wont to ride.

She heard him and looked up coldly. The chuckle died instantly. "Good morning," he said. "What's the matter with your horse? Can I help you?"

She stopped. "He has picked up a stone," she answered, "and I can't get it out. If you will be so good—"

He vaulted lightly over the fence that bounded the meadow and removed the offending stone. "Thank you," the young woman said. "You're quite welcome," he answered. "I'm always glad to help beauty in distress. He is a beautiful animal, isn't he?" he added hastily.

"Are you chaffing me?" she asked coldly.

He repressed a smile. "By no means. Better not ride for his day, a little bit, until we see how he walks. You ride early," he ventured.

"No earlier than you—swim," she replied briefly, glancing at his wet hair and towel. He at once became uncomfortably conscious of his rather unkempt appearance.

"Are you staying in New Chelsea?" "Yes."

"How long?" "Not long."

"Act not in the habit of cross-examining strangers on the road?" she inquired frigidly.

He reddened. "I beg your pardon," he said and slackened his pace to let her draw ahead.

"I think I'll ride now," she said, "if you will help me up. Crusader has stopped limping."

He held out his hand, she placed a foot in it and was lifted to the saddle. She murmured her thanks. But, although she gathered in the reins, she did not start away. For a moment she did look at the hills, apparently oblivious of the young man's presence. He wondered who she was and ventured again. "Why do you call him Crusader?"

She looked down at him. "Another question? You are incorrigible."

"I beg your pardon," he said again stiffly and marched up to her.



triumph at the feet of the day's sweet heart. She remembered also, with a smile, the stinging childish jealousy with which a freckle faced, short skirted girl had witnessed his devotion.

"And you're still here, buried alive in this out of the way corner of the world," she said softly. "Oh, John Dummeade! John Dummeade!"

Suddenly she touched her horse with the crop. He bounded forward and clattered along until the young man was overtaken. She pulled Crusader down to a walk, at which the young man looked up astonished. Curious as to her identity, but fearing another reproof, he cautiously refrained from further speech.

They went along in silence until they reached a point where the undulating road rose to command a view of the valley to the south and the town to the north. She reined in her horse.

"What a pity one can't find words for such a morning! And the wonder of it is that it has occurred, we don't know how many millions of times, always glorious."

"It makes one feel a bit—reverent—" "It makes one feel as helpless as—" She paused for lack of a comparison.

"As helpless as some chick will soon feel, unless the farmer's dog scorns off that hawk," he completed the sentence for her, pointing. Over a barnyard in the valley the big bird was soaring in narrowing, lowering circles. From beneath came faintly the cries of frightened fowls. Suddenly the hawk swooped low to the earth. Scarcely pausing, it soared aloft once more, leaving panic in the barnyard and one chick the less.

The young woman laughed. "There's an illustration of one fundamental law."

"The supremacy of the strong? That's an old theory, I know. A very pretty one—from the point of view of the hawk. But how about the chick?"

"Oh, if one is born a chick!"—She concluded the sentence with a shrug and a smile.



Suddenly, With a Laugh, She Was Gone Amid a Clatter of Hoofs.

of her shoulders. "Strength is its own law. Hasn't the world always been conquered and ruled by its strong?"

"I'm afraid that is true," he said soberly.

"Afraid! I should think you would be glad, since I have it from the New Chelsea Globe—you are a strong man."

He looked his astonishment. "You know who I am?"

"Of course! Did you think, Mr. Dummeade," she laughed—"did you think your charms outweighed the conventions? I am not a barbarian in the habit of philosophizing with strange young men on the road before 7 o'clock in the morning."

"What did you read in the Globe?" "The vanity of men! I read, 'Mr. Dummeade will undoubtedly make a strong candidate. The entire county wants him. It will have him.' It reads like a patent medicine advertisement, doesn't it? How does it feel to be wanted by an entire county, Mr. Dummeade?"

"It is," he confessed, "rather pleasant—if true. Who are you?"

And suddenly, with a laugh, she was gone, amid a clatter of hoofs.

Alone he addressed the morning. "She said I am strong. I wonder, am I strong—strong enough?" And, searching his soul for the answer, he heard no negative.

the strong. William Murchell was a distinguished member of a class whose climbing proclivities are not subdued by the incident of a lowly start. He was born in the obscure hill town of New Chelsea soon after Andrew Jackson and his contemporaries promulgated and illustrated the immortal doctrine, "The victor belongs the spoils." In the fashion made popular by Abraham Lincoln and other great men he secured an education and on the day he attained his majority was admitted to the practice of law in Benton county.

About the same time he entered the broader profession of politics, being then a Luskman Whig.

His military service, as perhaps best dismissed with the mention of a certain gold medal struck in his honor, by special act of congress, for gallant conduct on the field of battle. The individual have made much of this decoration. However, it probably required a finer courage to resign from the color of his home guard regiment on the eve of Gettysburg—this indeed was the fact—to accept the less exposed office of aid to the governor at the capital than to face the hail of rebel bullets. There are many ways of expressing one's patriotism. Later he served his country as prothonotary for Benton county. Afterward he passed through many gradations of political preferment, as representative in the general assembly of his state, as state senator, as state treasurer and finally as United States senator, which exalted office he held until—but we anticipate our history. He became in addition leader of his party organization, an epithet employed by those who objected to the term "boss."

William Murchell's creed was that of a respectable but practical man. He was a teetotaler and a Presbyterian elder and believed in the doctrine of foreordination and in a literal scriptural hell for those not numbered among the elect. He believed devoutly in the avowed and tacit principles of his party, although he was not bigoted and would on occasion take a secret hand in the affairs of the opposition. He had more than once read out of the party foldarily young men who ventured to foist his leadership.

He lived during at least two months of every year in the town of his birth, either in the square, white frame house on Maple street or at the farm, three miles west, which he let "on shares." New Chelsea was a quaint old fashioned town lying at the head of the Weehannock valley, quite content with its population of 5,000 and with the honor of being the county seat, which Murchell's influence had prevented from being moved to Plumville, that thriving little factory city fifteen miles away.

Down Main street one fine June afternoon he was walking with that air of abstraction which sits so well on the great.

"He has big possibilities." Unconsciously the senator spoke aloud.

His companion seemed to understand the reference. "He's all right," he answered. State Senator Jim Sheehan was a big, fat gentleman with furtive, twinkling eyes, a modicum of coarse good looks and a rolling, cock sure gait bred of no misfortune. He was a son of power. Fifteen years before he had gone to Plumville to work in the mills, an uncouth, unlettered Irishman, who could tell a good story, hold unlimited quantities of liquor and was not unwilling to work when money could not be had otherwise.

But not long for him had been the grime and roar and muscle racking of the mills. Money could be had more easily. Plumville was booming. There were streets to be graded and paved, public buildings to be constructed. Jim went into politics and because he was a good "vote getter" and had a certain rough talent for the game acquired power. He opened a saloon and acquired more power. He became a contractor and secured many contracts. One day the city awoke to the fact that Jim Sheehan owned its government. The citizens cried out in protest—and, with the habit of American cities, little and big, submitted. He became, by virtue of his alliance with Murchell, state senator from Benton county and leader—we cling to the euphemism—of the county organization.

(To Be Continued.)

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"My health has been very good ever since, and I praise your medicine to all my friends."—Mrs. VERA WILKES, R. F. D. No. 1, Plattsburg, Miss.

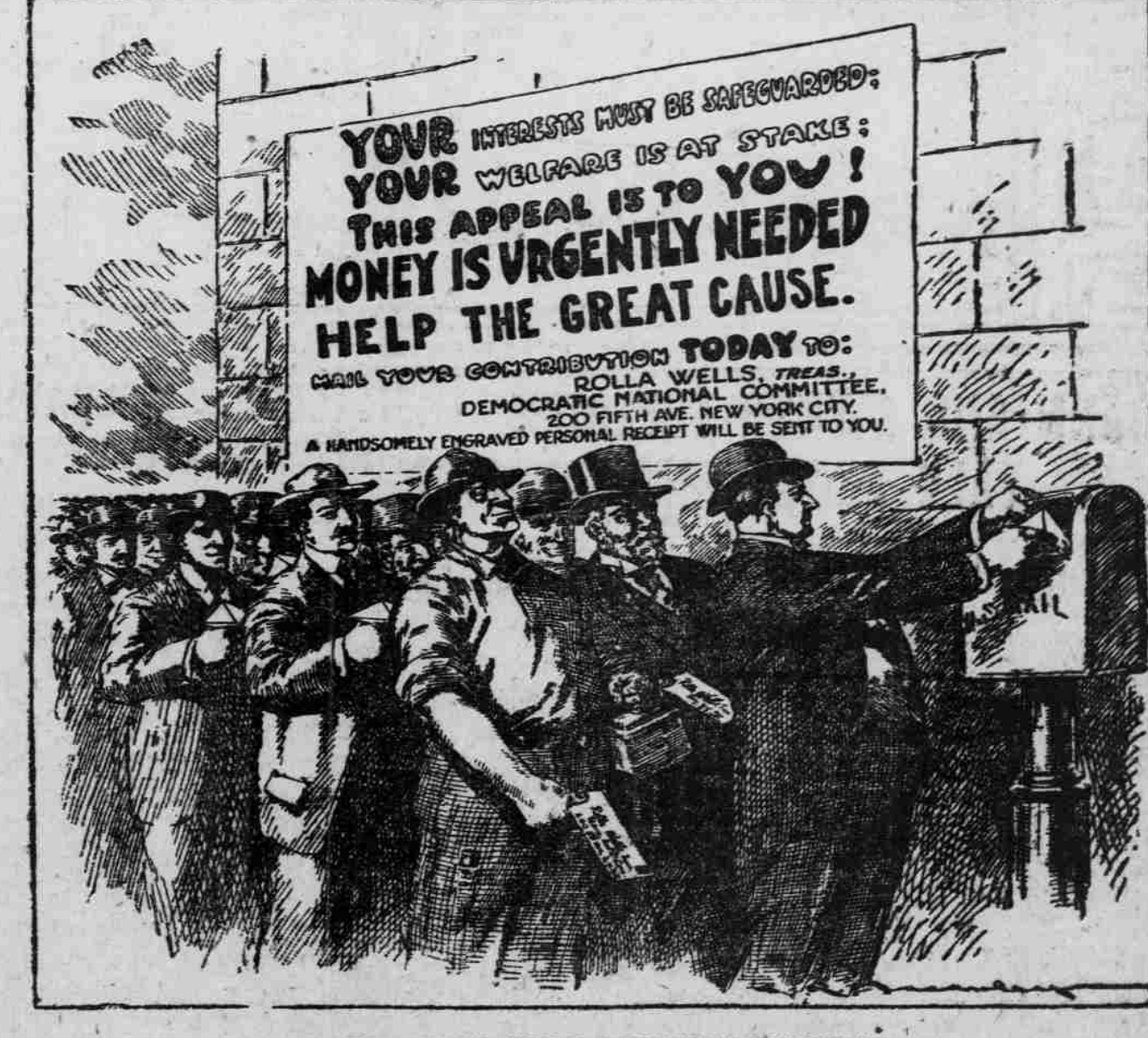
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The New Haven road last evening made the following official statement regarding the abandonment of the ferrying of the Colonial and Federal expresses across New York harbor.

The abandonment of the car boats for handling the heavy passenger trains between the Harlem river and the Jersey shore is due to many hardships beyond the control of the railroad transfer steamer.

LINEN SHOWER IN MERIDEN FOR BRIDGEPORT GIRL

The Meriden Journal has the following concerning the approaching nuptials of a Bridgeport couple.

and wild hop vines. A bounteous lunch was served, and many novel features contributed to a merry evening.

CONTROLLED MULLEN WEBS SOUTH MANCHESTER GIRL

New Haven, Oct. 18.—Controller Arthur D. Mullen, of this city, who last October made his triumphal entry into city hall as a city official by 304 votes despite heavy Democratic reverses along the ticket, will mark the anniversary of that success today by joining the ranks of the benedictines.

Good crackers to serve with salad are made with a half-inch cube of cheese set in the center of each cracker, which then is browned in the oven.

WILSON CAMPAIGN FUND

WOODROW WILSON LOYALTY COUPON

To C. R. CRANE, Vice Chairman Finance Committee, The Democratic National Committee, 900 Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

As a believer in the progressive ideals of government represented in the candidacy of Woodrow Wilson for President of the United States, and to the end that he may take the office free-handed, untrammeled, and obligated to none but the people of the country, I wish to contribute through you the sum of \$..... toward the expenses of Gov. Wilson's campaign.

# AMUSEMENTS

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