

THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

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NO. 34

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The Black and White Bill

An Honest Legislator's Experience With Graft

By HOWARD FIELDING

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Morton Strickland entered public life by way of the New York assembly. He had been lured into politics in a previous campaign, where he seemed to perceive a moral issue and had greatly assisted in the election of a man who subsequently proved to be a knave. Strickland was a big, handsome fellow, with the voice of a trumpet and a sharp wit; his crisp phrases caught the ear and were remembered and repeated; he could pin a characterization upon an adversary so that it would stick.



"I HAVE READ IT IN MY MIND TO WRITE YOU."

emergencies in which it is necessary to name a clean man on the normally dominant side in order that the minority may not accomplish a political upheaval.

It is doubtful that there ever was a man more thoroughly disgusted with the general principle of what is called "graft" than Strickland. In his private affairs he had been poisoned by it, smothered in it, and he had come to a furious belief that the only proper way to treat a grafter was with the toe of the boot. The bare mention of a bribe excited in his mind the idea of personal violence.

His chief inheritance had been a share in a lithographing establishment. The elder Strickland had been a partner in this business, but in the last of his life had withdrawn from active management because of ill health, and the affairs of the firm had fallen into a very bad way. After his father's death Morton Strickland tried to do something for the business. He went into it with unbounded enthusiasm, but small experience, and for a time he suffered from a great perplexity. There was an inexplicable reason why nothing could be done. It took Strickland more than a year to discover that the whole establishment from top to bottom was honeycombed with bribery; everybody in it was either the beneficiary or the victim of some form of graft.

When Strickland came to realize that this was the business which had been in part his father's he could have wept with rage and shame. He made a fierce and futile struggle and was finally forced to sell his interest upon very disadvantageous terms, for he was dealing with seasoned tricksters, and they had the upper hand of him.

One result of this experience was that he took up the study of law, for he had been worried partly through ignorance of his legal rights. He had just been admitted to the bar when he was elected to the assembly.

There was in Albany a man named Leroy Wendell, who had been a friend of Strickland's father, though considerably his junior. He was in a quiet way of practice, lived modestly and seemed to find his pleasure in his home, in good books, and the company of cultivated people. He offered Strickland the freedom of his office, the use of his library, and the hospitality of his home whenever the young man should care to come.

At the first glance the Wendell style of living seemed to favor of the miserly; their house was small, they kept but one servant, and the simplicity and openness of their economies had an air of something very near to affectation. Mrs. Wendell and two daughters completed the family. The elder of the children was her father's stenographer; the younger was still at school. A high average of personal beauty distinguished this family.

Strickland's first feeling was of interest; a mere sense of pleasurable novelty which developed into admiration. An uplifting influence took hold upon him in their home. When he turned toward it one evening the day's evil seemed to fall away from him, and he left it always with good thoughts. Love sprang up like a rose in a garden. He was in love with Laura Wendell.

About this time there came a sort of crisis in Strickland's personal affairs, and he was threatened with considerable loss. The details are unnecessary here. The difficulty grew out of the sale of his interest in the lithographing business. He had, in effect, invested some of this money be-

fore he had received it. His former associates were delaying payments, but his own that he agreed to make could not be put off without danger of the loss of all. In this emergency he consulted Mr. Wendell, who advised him that he must not default in any payment. True enough, but where should he get the money? Mr. Wendell thought he might be able to help the young man in securing a loan, and though Strickland was very unwilling to accept this favor, he eventually did so. The money was advanced by a friend of Mr. Wendell, an old lawyer now retired from practice and supposed to be entirely disengaged from active affairs. His name was Curtis B. Connor.

Meanwhile an interesting situation had sprung up in the halls of legislation. Members were going about bright eyed and eager, and the older ones were talking of the "good old days." It was a measure with money on both sides of it. The usual thing in these days is for the money to be on one side and the public on the other. But in this instance there was a battle of the giants, extremely doubtful in issue, and a member who desired to be "influenced" could look in either direction.

The fight centered in the assembly. That was where the bushwhacking and the plotting of bribery filled the air, but Strickland seemed to be immune. He had been introduced to a great many lobbyists, ranging from seeming respectabilities to the lowest of created bipeds; but though some of these persons "sounded" him in a rather crude way, he received no direct proposition.

And in the midst of all this he was utterly in doubt as to his proper course—confused by rumors, blinded by his own inexperience with large affairs and unable to decide in which direction lay the public interest. Two powerful syndicates were fighting for and against the measure, and these, from the names of two lesser figures in the legal talent of the lobby, became known as the black ring and the white ring.

Strickland had carried his doubts to Wendell, who at first shared them, but on a certain evening the two men sat late before an office fire in the lawyer's house, and as a result of their conversation Strickland came to a decision. As a choice of evils he would vote upon the white side, for so Wendell advised him with arguments that seemed excellent.

On the second day following a little after noon Strickland was passing through a corridor of the statehouse when he met a veteran assemblyman named Stuart Porter, a courtly, handsome man, who had treated the new member with consideration and had been of considerable help to him. Porter had taken no active part in the debate on what was known as the black and white bill. His true attitude was unknown to Strickland, who had often been upon the point of asking him for advice.

They paused for a moment's talk, and it seemed to the younger man that the other regarded him strangely; there was a certain sadness in his manner. Strickland was of a hasty temper and impatient of mysteries. It was his habit to speak straight out.

"What is the matter?" said he.

"Have I offended you in any way?"

"The old gentleman started somewhat with surprise at this abrupt question, and his face hardened, but in a moment relaxed into a very kindly expression.

"If you were keen enough to see that," said he, "I wonder that you have been so easily deceived in other matters."

"What matters?" said Strickland.

"I have had it in my mind to warn you several times," said the other, "but you carry your head rather high for so young a man. It seemed to me that perhaps you needed a lesson. You will vote upon what we call the white side this afternoon, I suppose?"

"Yes, I will," said Strickland.

"And the loan from Curtis B. Connor was, I believe, \$2,000?"

"What do you mean?" demanded Strickland, but gently, for the other's manner impressed him.

"Mr. Wendell secured it for you," said Porter. "Mr. Wendell has represented the interests that back of the white ring in Albany for twenty years."

"I don't believe it! Why, the man is poor."

"He seems so."

"Seems? Do you know how stumpy he is? Are you aware that his daughter serves him as secretary?"

"Mr. Wendell needs a secretary whom he can trust," answered Porter. "There, there! I mean no disrespect to the young lady! I know your private sentiments in that quarter. She does not see any wrong in her father's dealings; she serves him faithfully, loyally, trustfully. She is an admirable girl."

"But Mr. Wendell's case is not one that we can pretend about. It is well known. Ask Rockwell; here he comes."

Mr. Rockwell was an old time member of the assembly, a man of great ability. Strickland rushed up to him, scarce knowing what he did.

"We were speaking of Mr. Wendell," he began.

"Yes," interrupted Rockwell, "and so are a good many other people. They are saying that he has got you fixed. Now, don't get excited. You haven't done any harm yet. Go into your committee room and sit down and keep cool. I'll send you a document that will help you think."

Strickland was dazed, and before he could frame a reply the group was interrupted by several men. In the presence of some of whom he did not care to speak. The suggestion of the committee room stuck in his mind. He went there, and the room being empty, he peered the door with a wild fear.

He saw clearly enough that Wendell had duped him, and all his long cherished wrath against the crime of bribery rose up in fire to his head.

A messenger entered the room and gave Strickland a letter. It had been opened. He glanced at the envelope and saw that it was one of Mr. Wendell's and was addressed to Curtis B. Connor. It seemed right to read it, for this must be the document to which Rockwell had referred.

The letter was typewritten and quite long. It ran upon the second

page and was signed by Wendell. In the boldest terms it outlined to Connor the scheme of the loan, the money really to be furnished by the backers of the white ring for the purpose of clinching Wendell's influence over Strickland and securing his vote.

Strickland crumpled the letter in his hand and rushed out of the room. He went straight to Wendell's office. Laura was there, and he put the letter into her hands.

"Read it," said he, and she, alarmed, drew out the letter from the envelope.

She read about half the first page and then turned to the second and stared at her father's signature. Then with trembling hands she sought for a notebook in a drawer and, having found it, turned the pages hastily.

"Here are the notes," said she. "Wait! I will compare them. Yes, the few lines on the second page are right; that is the real second page. The first is a forgery. See! It is our paper! They have stolen a sheet, but the type is not the same—not to my eye. It was not done on this machine, but on one of the same make. Look at the 'er'! Look at the 'it'! Compare them."

Strickland bent his attention with frenzied concentration to this comparison. Then he stood erect, his face contorted, yet when he spoke his voice was calm.

"If I should not find you here," he said, "I should have gone back to the capitol and voted as those devils planned to make me. I should have voted against your father's advice, believing that he had tried to bribe me. There shall be a reckoning for this."

"Let me read the letter as it was," she said.

"It need not say that its purport was entirely innocent and that it made no reference whatever to the black and white bill. All that was on the substituted first page which the conspirators had got up after stealing the original letter from Connor's office."

"I don't ask you to forgive me, Laura, but they will deny ever having spoken to you on the subject. You cannot prove that this forged letter came from them. You can accuse them publicly, but they will laugh at you. I advise you to ignore the whole matter."

"This was more than Strickland's temper would permit him to do; far more,

indeed, than the girl desired, for she was as angry as he was and argued with him only to disengage him from actual physical violence. In this she succeeded, and yet Strickland managed to pay both Porter and Rockwell in full before he was done with them. Neither of them could be elected today to be dog catcher in his native city, for Strickland was capable of sustained animosity and had gifts of natural ability very dangerous to his enemies. But Wendell, whose reputation had been tried with in as gross a manner, could never be led into such a trap. The surface of his quiet life was not even ruffled by it. His sound good sense is an excellent background for the oppressive force of Strickland, now his son-in-law. Mr. Wendell himself is a lover of peace and of the arts and of the health of some.

Young Lord Leland made a trip to New York and proposed to a rather elderly heiress. She refused him. "I am sorry, Lord Leland," she said, "but I can never be anything more to you than a—"

"Just my luck!" he interrupted, reaching for his hat and stick. "And I've got to go back home already!"

Argonaut.

His Flaming French.

"The people in these foreign hotels," said the young tourist, "have the queerest ways I ever saw."

"What's the matter now?"

"Why, I just now asked the clerk in French what news from America, and he replied that the Russian interpreter was out. I'd like to know what connection he thought there was between the two."—Lippincott's.

A Rattled Bridegroom.

"I married a girl yesterday," said a clergyman, "to a youth with a rather thick head. At the beginning of the ceremony I said to him:

"You are to repeat this after me."

"And then prior to beginning the declaration I whispered:

"Take her right hand."

"Take her right hand," the stupid fellow belated, and everybody in the church laughed.

"Afterward he couldn't get the ring on the bride's finger."

"We'll it," I whispered.

"And acting on my advice, he put her little white finger in his mouth and after fidgeting it thoroughly succeeded in making the ring slip on."



"HERE ARE THE NOTES," SAID SHE.

A PICTURE ON GLASS

By ALLAN C. CARLYLE

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The residence of the Count Van Arsdale at Rotterdam, Holland, is a very old one. Indeed, it was standing when the first Dutch settlers bought Manhattan Island for \$24. In recent times David one of the Van Arsdale family, came to New York to make a home there, but he did not remain long.

There were two reasons for his return to Holland. Firstly, he was in love with a member of another branch of the family, Anneke Van Arsdale, the daughter of the man who had the title of the Van Arsdale manor house. Secondly, there was a tradition that David Van Arsdale was the real Count. The title and estates had passed from David's great-grandfather to an ancestor of Anneke's, and it had never been clear how the transaction came about.

David believed that Anneke's father knew something about it, but the count would not admit that he did. When David first came courtship Anneke her father favored the suit, but a very wealthy suitor having asked for her hand, the count, feeling that money was needed in the family, favored the latter. Anneke would not wed him and would not accept David without her father's consent.

The hope was to be no hope that the count would relent. David determined to go back to America. He neither could nor would deprive the girl he loved of his prospective possessions, and since she must eventually pass to another, he did not wish to be near her. The night before he was to sail he was sitting in the great square hall which was once used by the Dutch for a living room, making his last visit to Anneke preceding his departure. The lovers were very despondent.

"I believe," said David, "that the reason your father first favored our union is that he believes me to be the rightful heir to the title and estates he is now enjoying."

"Why do you think that, David?" asked the girl.

"Because there are those who say that I am there has always been a mystery connected with the death of my great-grandfather, John Van Arsdale, and the assumption of the title by Henry. It is well known that Henry's mind was subsequently affected, and it is rumored that this came from remorse."

"But father has nothing to do with that."

"No; but if there was fraud in the change of the title and estates from his ancestor to mine I am the real Count Van Arsdale. If I married you the two branches of the family would be united and the fraud, if any, would not matter. That, I believe, is the reason your father's willingness at first, because there is no other reason. I am poor, and you need a rich husband."

At this moment something singular happened. Winding about the hall to the upper story was a staircase. Midway where the staircase turned at right angles with the lower and upper parts, was a window. It was of curious construction, the glass being of different thicknesses in different parts. The window electricity was first converted into and utilized as light. The searchlight had just been invented, and some electricians were experimenting with one of them on the roof of a neighboring building. Suddenly the window mentioned was brilliantly illuminated. David and Anneke looked at it in astonishment. Instead of being ordinary white glass, it was a picture—a picture in black and white—such as we now see hanging in windows that the light may bring out the scene. And the subject, a man in the Dutch costume of the olden time, lay on his back over his shoulders by another man who had plunged a dagger into his heart. Below were the words: "The Murder of Henry, Count Van Arsdale."

A mystery was explained by a mystery. The window till that moment had been a blank. The invention of the searchlight had revealed what it contained. But who many years before had learned to make a picture on glass? And what light did he use to make it out? For how could he have made it without seeing it?

One fact of its being there at all might be explained by the fact that the murderer hooded over his crime until he lost his reason and placed it there while a monomaniac.

While the lovers looked the picture disappeared as instantaneously as it had sprung into being. Then Anneke covered her eyes with her hands.

"It is descended from a murderer," she said. "All that father possesses is yours."

David did not sail for America the next day. Workmen came in, took out the glass in the window and replaced it with a stained one. They came a wedding between David and Anneke, and the count, having no male issue, surrendered his title to his son-in-law and his estates to his daughter. Having done this, he settled for America, and Holland never saw him again. He buried himself in the wilds of Canada.

David and Anneke still live in the house in Rotterdam where the picture was revealed to them, but where the picture is kept no one knows. Some say it has been destroyed.

The principle adopted in the making of freepress paints is to incorporate with the other ingredients of the paint an ammonium salt, which under the influence of heat will give off ammonia and so produce an atmosphere unfavorable to combustion. The solubility of most ammonium salts renders them unsuitable for this purpose, but good results have been obtained by mixing the pigment with insoluble ammonium magnesium phosphate and a special medium consisting of linoleate of lead in oil of turpentine.

North Carolina University Men at Dinner in New York.

North Carolina University Men at Dinner in New York.

Through the efforts of James A. Gwyn, Alfred W. Haywood, Jr., and Francis A. Gudgeon, the New York city alumni of the University of North Carolina, were treated to a rare entertainment on Saturday night, October 14. Instead of arranging the usual kind of dinner—with spick-and-span tables, a profusion of knives and forks, aggressive and unnecessary waiters and a series of indigestible dishes with French names—the committee provided a "beefsteak dinner" at a famous restaurant.

When the alumni had gathered in the outer hall they were led into a large room at one end of which was a huge open fire with broiling bars above. The cooks and the beefsteak were ready, and as soon as the Chapel Hillians took their seats, each at a little, rough, coverless table all his own, the cooking began. After that it was all easy and beefsteak and bread and beer, about the only concessions to convention being a preliminary course of raw oysters and after-dinner coffee.

Long, set speeches had been tabooed, as the profound disquisitions upon International Peace at the last alumni dinner had been declared sufficient provender of that kind for a number of years. The anecdote and the reminiscence, the merry quip and jest, reigned supreme. Judge Augustus Van Wyck, Regt. St. Clair Hester and Dr. Charles Baskerville led in recounting humorous incidents of their college days, and were ably followed by others.

—Ambitious young men and ladies should learn telegraphy, for, since the new 8-hour law became effective there is a shortage of many thousand telegraphers. Positions pay from \$50 to \$70 a month to beginners. The Telegraph Institute of Columbia, S. C. and five other cities is operated under supervision of R. R. Officials and all students are placed when qualified. Write them for particulars.

Martha, the little lion tamer with Sparks' circus, which was wintering at the Salisbury fair grounds last winter, died a few days ago from the effects of a bite by one of the lions of her troupe of performing wild animals. The child was about 11 or 12 years old.

To Cure a Cold in One Day.

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. E. W. Grove's signature is on each box—25c.

Norval Marshall, colored, was electrocuted in the State prison at Raleigh Friday morning for criminal assault upon Mrs. Joseph Chaplin in Warren county September 15.

Learn Automobile Business.

The Southern Automobile College, Oak Ridge, N. C., is by all odds the best equipped automobile school south of New York. With its splendid corps of factory trained automobile experts, and super \$10,000 equipment it is prepared to give a course equal in all respects to any school of the kind in the world. Its honesty and reliability is guaranteed by the presence at its head of Prof. M. H. Holt, of Oak Ridge Institute. It has turned out scores of men who are filling splendid positions as Garage men, Demonstrators, and Chauffeurs, to say nothing of the many who have taken the course to learn how to manage their own cars. Special rates are offered to those who enter before November the first. This is the best opportunity ever offered young men of the South to learn this most fascinating and paying business. Those interested can get illustrated Booklets of information by applying. A postal card will bring it.

The directors of the State School for the Feeble Minded have elected Dr. I. M. Hardy, of Washington, N. C., superintendent. Buildings are being prepared for the buildings, which are to be located at Kinston. It is hoped to have them completed in a year.

Mount Vernon School furnishes education, culture and growth of character to boys and young men with or without money. The school is located on a large farm in Warren county immediately on the Seaboard Air Line Railway and is for boarding pupils exclusively. For further information, address Mount Vernon School, Litleton, N. C.—28Sept.

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By virtue of the authority vested in me by an order of Alamance Superior Court, I will, on

MONDAY, NOV. 6, 1911, at twelve o'clock, noon, at the court house door in Graham, sell at public outcry to the best bidder the following described real property, to-wit:

A tract or parcel of land situated and being in Patterson Township, Alamance County, North Carolina, adjoining the lands of L. T. Smith, W. E. Overman, J. A. Hornaday, W. T. Smith and others, and bounded as follows:

Beginning at a stone, J. A. Hornaday's corner; thence East 70 poles to a stone; thence North 30 poles to a stone; thence East 21 poles to a stone; thence South 60 poles to a stone; thence East 44 poles to a stone; thence South 85 poles to a stone; thence West 107 poles to the middle of a spring; thence West 46 poles to a stone; thence West 83 poles to a gum bush; thence North 105 poles to the beginning, containing 97 acres, more or less.

Said land is sold to create assets to pay debts of the late Manlyff Overman.

TERMS OF SALE: One-third cash; the other two-thirds in equal installments due at six and twelve months, the deferred payments to be evidenced by bonds carrying interest from day of sale until paid, and title to the property reserved until the payment of the purchase money is complete.

This is a valuable property, and is an opportunity to acquire a good farm at a reasonable price.

J. L. SCOTT, Jr., Pub. Adm'r.,
As Adm'r of the estate of Manlyff Overman.
October 3, 1911.

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Since July 1 there has been issued from the office of the Secretary of State over 900 registrations for new automobiles, running the number of registered machines in the State up to 3,560.