

1911

The sheriff: a modern Maine story in which pride and politics, romance and rum are curiously intermingled

James Perrigo

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Perrigo, James, "The sheriff: a modern Maine story in which pride and politics, romance and rum are curiously intermingled" (1911). *Books and Publications*. 27.
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THE SHERIFF

By JAMES PERRIGO

A
Modern
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PORTLAND, MAINE
THE FRANKLIN PRINTING COMPANY
231 FEDERAL STREET

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(THE SHERIFF)

BY
JAMES (PERRIGO)

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INTRODUCTION

FOR over half a century the State of Maine has drawn the attention of the world because of its prohibitory law. Both advocates and opponents of license, local option, prohibition and every phase of the temperance question cease not to write and lecture about the "situation in Maine." One would suppose from the volume of public address and printed page on both sides of the question that has appealed to the patient public, that, at least, those who are interested, would by this date have understood the "prohibition situation in Maine." Yet, how could they, when from one source it is proclaimed that liquor is as easily obtained in Bangor as in Boston, from another it is as loudly announced that Maine is absolutely dry?

There is no man better qualified to present the real facts than the writer of this volume. In observation and experience, in business and politics, in consecration to a cause and participation in local and State contests, and in personal knowledge of the manipulations of wily politicians, he is conceded to be, by those who know him, an authority on this political prohibition puzzle that has baffled so many. He is capable of drawing a true picture of the facts and presenting the real political situation.

The liquor question in Maine is political and intensely partisan. It has to deal with governors and sheriffs, county attorneys and courts, liquor politicians and vote-selling citizens, anarchistic brewing and distilling corporations and a Bureau of Internal Revenue at Washington. I have travelled not a little in Maine, and I know that, for dollar-sake and party-sake, nullification has been nurtured till it has become a poisonous political dragon that has sapped much glory from the fair name of the Pine Tree State.

W. DEWITT LUKENS.

HUDSON, N. Y.

January 24, 1911.

THE SHERIFF

A MODERN MAINE STORY

CHAPTER I

NEAR the shore of the bay where the waves broke was the sheen of emerald and rainbow tinted mist, broken by splashes of silver and shimmer of gold, while in the far distance, where it joined the wide ocean, a glowing purple completed the radiant color picture.

The girl stood on a high, flat-topped rock gazing spell-bound upon the wide expanse of water, dotted by bits of green islands, with white-winged yachts and schooners moving swiftly harborward before the stiff breeze. As the wind blew stronger and the tide rose higher, the waves broke in mighty crashes on the rocks around, the spray tossing far above her head and falling in diamond flashes back to its home in the sea. Then a wave greater than the others burst with a thunderous crash against the great rock on which she stood; a mass of water was hurled into the air as if by some mighty inhabitant of the sea and, falling in a great shower, drenched her from head to feet, almost sweeping her from the rock down into the wild swirling water.

To a young man sitting on the grassy hillside a few rods away, gazing dreamily at the beautiful scene before him, the girl in her white dress with only a touch of color here and there, added the one touch of human interest needed to complete the wondrous picture of sky and water, island and shore.

A louder crash of a wave against the rock, followed by a startled cry from the girl, awoke him from his reverie.

Unobserved by either, the tide had risen until the rock on which the girl stood was entirely surrounded by water.

That in itself was not a serious matter, reflected the young man as he leaped to his feet, for he knew that it was not so deep but that he could wade to the rock, but he also knew that this entire shore was but a wild jumble of rocks, large and small, and so broken and slippery that it required careful stepping and a clear head to reach the rock, even when the tide left the rocks uncovered.

But while he thought, he was running swiftly down the rough, uneven slope to the shore.

Another wave, but not so high, broke as he stepped into the water. His impulse was to rush forward madly to the rescue of the girl; but he knew that to do so would result only in the loss of his own life without saving that of the girl; so with cool, steady nerves and using his strength carefully, he stepped into the water, calling to the girl to throw herself flat on the rock and grasp any slight projections which she could reach.

The water was only to his knees, but was rushing madly back and forth, threatening to sweep him from his slippery foothold at any moment.

Then came the second wave, a great mass of black rolling water at the base, green in the curl of it and topped with diamond dotted spray.

The man paused, tense, expectant, bracing his right foot backward against a projecting rock and bending his left knee downward, stooping in the attitude of a trained athlete waiting to receive the onslaught of the enemy.

The girl, lying sidewise on the rock with her back to the

oncoming wave, looked bravely into his face, but did not cry out or speak, her fingers clinging closely to crevices in the rock.

Majestically the wave rolled inward and broke with a resounding crash against the rock. At the same instant the man "ducked" low and the flood of water broke over him. Then reversing his position, he braced his left foot and threw his strength backward against the fierce pull of the receding water. When it had past, he opened his eyes and saw to his relief that the girl was still clinging to the top of the rock. Being so much higher than he, she had received only a small part of the force of the wave, but enough to test her strength severely.

It was now a question of seconds, thought the man, to reach the girl and get back to lower water before the third and higher wave should have broken.

Firmly and cautiously he worked his way forward and had reached the steep inward side of the rock, when he saw that it was too late to attempt to return ahead of the wave. Grasping the girl's hands, he cried to her to jump; and, drawing her down beside him, their fingers clutching the crevices made by the waves, their feet braced in opposite directions, they awaited the onslaught. The force of the wave in its coming would be broken by the great mass of the rock, but it seemed hardly possible that their strength would be sufficient to prevent the back flow of the water from pulling them away from the rock and throwing them into the boiling mass of foam outside it.

Onward like a great mountain rolled the mass of water, its curling, foam-crested top towering above their heads. "Press close to the rock, hold hard and drop your head," the man cried, tightening his grip on her waist.

The mountain of water shattered against the rock and broke in a swirling mass of foam over and around them. Instantly they felt the pull of the receding water, like a thousand animate beings determined to draw them to death. They were thrown from their slippery foothold and swept along the side of the rock, clutching desperately at any little projections that their hands encountered. When it seemed that they must be drawn around its base and out in the foaming flood where they must be dashed against the rock by the next incoming wave, they were suddenly lifted into the air and as suddenly dropped. The man grasped something rough and hard with the strength of desperation and clung to it until the retreating water lost much of its force. They had been lifted over one large rock and dropped between it and another.

The man struggled to his feet, dragging the girl with him. He saw that she was unconscious from the shock; but if he could reach the shore, or even reach a spot near it where the rocks were higher than elsewhere, before the next wave should overtake them, he had no doubt that she could be speedily revived.

Confused by the sound of the waters, the blood pounding from heart to brain, panting for breath, he grasped the girl by the arm and, keeping her head above water, started on his perilous way to the shore. Twice he slipped and almost lost his footing; and, as he steadied himself the second time, he saw the wave nearing them so rapidly that there was no hope of reaching the shore in advance of it. Bracing himself again and lying almost flat upon the rocks, for the water was not so deep here, he waited until the wave rolled over them. With his feet firmly against a rock, he was able to resist the backward pull of the water and struggled, only half

conscious himself, with his unconscious burden to the shore.

Others had gathered and strong hands reached out and drew them up on the warm sward out of reach of the hungry waters.

The girl was carried to a house near by; but when the rescuers returned for the man he had disappeared.

CHAPTER II

A FEW days after the foregoing incident Hazel Worthington and her dearest chum, Evelyn James, sat on a rustic bench overlooking the beautiful bay.

"How smooth the water is to-day, it looks more like a mill-pond or a great mirror than an arm of the Atlantic," said Evelyn.

"Yes," replied Hazel, "but I think I will always think of a calm sea as a sleeping giant that may arouse at any moment and drag one to death."

"I fear that your nerves are a little unstrung yet because of your terrible experience a few days ago."

"Perhaps they are a little. Every night in my sleep I seem to hear the thunder of the water in my ears and feel the unyielding grip of the waves as they seemed to reach out like living arms to clutch me and pull me back."

"And yet you seem to avoid speaking of your rescuer. Are you entirely in the dark as to the mysterious stranger and why he disappeared so suddenly?" and Evelyn glanced suspiciously at her friend, only to see that her face had grown very pale and her lips were trembling, e'er she turned her head hastily as if to look at a little boat with idly hanging sail floating listlessly with the tide at some little distance from the shore. As she looked at the figure in the boat a sudden wave of color swept over her face, leaving it almost instantly white again, and the proud head drooped sidewise to the back of the rustic seat.

"Oh! you are ill," cried Evelyn, "you have not recovered from the shock to your nerves, and it is mean of me to ask

you questions." Yet she looked with increasing interest at her friend's averted face and then turned to look at the man in the boat. "I do believe it is 'the mysterious stranger' and that Hazel knows who he is," she said to herself, "and our proud, sly puss won't tell. I wonder what the mystery can be?" But she quickly drew Hazel's head to her shoulder and held her tight until the throbbing heart beat normally again.

From the little boat in the bay, Laurence Freeman had seen the tableaux and only then did he realize that the almost imperceptible moving tide had floated him near enough to the shore to make it possible for one to recognize him.

"What a fool I am," he mused. "I came here hoping that I would but get a glimpse of her; I, who thought that I had let my life work take the place of love; and it has only brought back the old feeling. I wonder if she recognized me before losing consciousness in that struggle in the water? But whether she did or not makes no difference. If she did know me and I should speak to her now, it would appear like presuming on her gratitude, and if she did not—well, I cannot speak to her until—"

A sudden splash in the water near him interrupted his troubled thoughts. He had noticed a short time before a row boat approaching him and that the man rowing was handling the oars so awkwardly that he had mentally pronounced him drunk. He turned just in time to see the man disappear beneath the water and the boat begin to sink.

"He must have been so drunk that, in attempting to move to the other end of the boat he toppled over and turned the boat over with him," thought Laurence, as he rowed hastily to the spot and waited until the man should come to the

surface ; " no sober man could have brought about such an accident in such calm weather."

In a moment the man came to the surface and Laurence dragged him into his own boat without much difficulty. He had sustained nothing worse than a wetting and was soon laughing over his mishap.

"Where do you wish to go?" asked Laurence.

"If you will just land me on the beach in that little cove, I'll be all right," he replied. "I was going to meet my sister and her friend, Miss James, who are sitting on the hillside yonder, when I came that cropper into the water."

This was just what Laurence did not wish to do, but he could not well refuse. So he turned his boat toward the cove, thankful that a jutting headland hid him from the girls and hoping that he could land his passenger and get away unseen.

The bow of the boat touched the shore very lightly and, allowing his passenger barely time to step out, Laurence backed away as quickly as possible but not in time to escape recognition by the two girls, who now came hurrying down the hillside.

Hazel paused for a moment as if to call to him, but instead turned to her brother with the exclamation, "Why, how did you meet with such an accident in such calm weather?"

"Oh," replied Randolph, laughingly, "I slipped as I attempted to stand on the seat and the dinky little boat tipped over with me."

The answer seemed to satisfy Evelyn James, but Hazel looked disturbed and troubled.

"This is no thrilling rescue like yours, Sis," continued Randolph; "at worst it is simply a spill and a wetting.

Does the fellow who pulled me out look like your mysterious rescuer?"

"Yes," replied Hazel, looking away quickly, "but you must go to the house and change your clothing at once."

"Wait here then, and I will be back in a very few minutes."

If he had been intoxicated, as Laurence suspected, his fall into the cold water had sobered him.

As he passed out of hearing distance, Hazel turned her troubled face to Evelyn and said falteringly, "Evelyn, dear, I wish that when Randolph asks you to marry him that—that—well, that you would refuse."

"Why! Why, Hazel, don't you think I am good enough to be your sister?"

"Certainly, I think you are; but it would be better for you if you should not marry him."

"But what is the reason, Hazel?"

"Since you insist, I suppose I must tell you, but it is hard; I am so sorry to have to tell you that Randolph drinks."

"Oh!" laughed Evelyn, "you were so serious that I thought it was something awful, like insanity or something like that. I know that he drinks a little, but I won't mind that, so long as he doesn't get drunk and abuse me."

"But, Evelyn, if you do accept him, please make it on condition that he stops drinking for at least a year before you are married."

Evelyn only smiled sweetly in reply; and just then Randolph Worthington, smooth of face, bright of eye and strong in his young manhood, joined them.

Hazel soon excused herself and with a whispered word to Evelyn, "Make him promise, dear," she left them together.

And so, where the waves rolled lazily against the shore and the trees cast their shadow over the rustic seat where they sat and the summer sunlight flooded all the sea, the old, old story was told again with all the earnestness and radiant hope of youth.

Blushingly, Evelyn answered "yes" to Randolph's passionate appeal; but she did not make the condition that Hazel had asked.

"I have a good job," Randolph said when they began to speak of practical things; "yesterday the foreman in the stove foundry where I am employed resigned and I have been advanced to the place with a salary of forty dollars a week. It is more than enough to live on, and besides, I have saved a little nest egg. I know of a nice cottage which I can buy on the instalment plan, so why need we wait? Will you not make the happy day soon, dear?"

"We will make it a month from to-day, if you wish," she said.

And so in another month there was a wedding to which all the friends of the young couple were invited—and all seemed gay and happy except Hazel. Though greeting all in a smiling way, back in the depths of her hazel eyes was a look that told those who knew her best of a trouble that could not quite be hidden.

Randolph saw the shadow amidst the gaiety. "What is it, Sis?" he asked, as they stood together a moment a little apart from the others.

"It is the drink, Randolph," she said. "You have assumed a great responsibility to-day; remember your duty to your wife as well as to your employers and the men under you; and promise me that you will not touch another drop of liquor."

"It is foolish to let that trouble you, Sis," he replied, laughingly. "You look as if you thought I would be a common drunk and before the police court in a week or two. You know I only take a glass now and then, as most men do, and there is no danger of my disgracing myself or you."

"But there is danger that the appetite will grow on you and unfit you for the higher duties of life. Please won't you promise to stop now?" she asked pleadingly.

"I couldn't stop right now, you know," he answered, still in his laughing humor, "I must help drink that champagne that I ordered from Boston for the wedding supper. But I'll tell you what I will promise," soberly, "if I find the habit growing on me or unfitting me in any way for my work, I will stop."

Hazel noticed that he did not stint himself but drank several glasses of the light champagne at supper; and she was considerably surprised to see that Evelyn sipped a glass of it with evident enjoyment.

CHAPTER III

THE sheriff of Landbercum county, Maine, sat in his office counting a roll of bills, a satisfied smile on his fat face.

"A round three thousand," he chuckled, "kerect with a K. In the next three months I can bring the total for my two terms up to an even one hundred thousand dollars. Not so bad for a man who had only three hundred dollars and a lot of debts on coming into office."

"This plan of collecting one dollar and fifty cents per barrel from the brewers on all beer and ale sold in the county is a pretty good one. And I flatter myself that it was a pretty neat plan of mine to have the money come by express direct from the brewers. Checks can be traced, and," grinning broadly, "some of my good temperance friends might think I had been bribed if they learned of my receiving checks from a brewer. As it is, if I should be accused, no rumseller could 'peach' and say that he had bribed me, even though he does pay the brewer the extra one-fifty on each barrel he sells. I guess I was witty to keep on the safe side on account of those fanatical Prohibitionists who are continually raving about nullification of the prohibitory law, though," musingly, "of course 'the machine' would pull me through in any case. I'm too valuable a man for the party to lose."

"But hold on! there is my contribution to the next campaign to come out of that. I wonder if I reckoned so as to get that over and above the hundred thousand?"

Taking a well thumbed note book from his desk he carefully added up a column of figures.

"Yes, it's all right," he continued soliloquizing, "campaign fund figured out and the one hundred thousand all clear for real estate investments."

His self-satisfied musings were interrupted by a knock at the door. Hastily depositing the bills and note book in his desk, he called, "Come in!"

Entered Hazel Worthington, somewhat pale and timid, but with a light of great determination in her eyes as she returned his "good morning."

"What can I do for you?" he asked, with what he doubtless intended for a kindly smile, though it resolved itself into a sort of sensual twisting of the thick lips and drawing down of the eyelids that brought a tinge of color to Hazel's cheeks and a look of disgust into her wonderful hazel eyes. Hazel was beautiful, and the sheriff could appreciate the mere externals of a well nigh perfect face and form, but not the spirit that animated it.

"I have come to ask you to close the saloons in the city, especially Mike McBlinche's on Raffle street," said Hazel with a very apparent effort.

"My dear young lady," replied the sheriff, rubbing his fat chin and narrowing the slit between his eyelids still more, "my force of deputies are busy all the time hunting down rumsellers. Haven't you noticed in the daily papers the reports of the number of raids we are making every day?"

"Yes, but no one is arrested, and I am told that they begin selling again as soon as your deputies are out of sight."

"That may be true in a few instances, but you know that we cannot make arrests unless we find someone in charge, and if they have a supply of liquor hidden and keep out of sight themselves, we can only hope to catch them the next time."

Hazel looked at the sheriff sharply, but his face had assumed an "injured honesty" expression that puzzled her a good deal.

"But won't you try at least to close Mike McBlinche's place? arrest him! put him in jail!" she cried hotly. "The law says that he shall not sell, but he is ruining men and their families by the score."

"But why Mike's Place in particular, young lady!" asked the sheriff in a soft, unctuous voice. "Mike declares that he is selling nothing but soft drinks which are allowed by law to be sold, nothing intoxicating, and he appears to be running an orderly place."

"And you believe a rumseller?" angrily.

"Well, Mike has always appeared to be honest and my deputies have never found anything stronger than Uno there."

"Sheriff Rumpler," said Hazel, advancing a step and trembling a little in her excitement, "Mike McBlinche is selling whiskey and a great deal of it. My only brother has to pass Mike's Place twice each day in going to and from his work. He promised me on his wedding day that if he found the appetite growing on him that he would stop drinking. He has been married two years and has a little child now, but the temptation of the stuff right under his nose overcomes him. He is foreman of the Tontine Stove Foundry, and if they knew that he drinks they would discharge him. But if Mike's Place, as you call it, were closed I am sure that he would stop, for he realizes now it is a habit that is hard to break and he would like to get away from it."

"It is too bad that a man cannot control his appetite," said Rumpler, "but as I have said before we have never found any whiskey at Mike's. Do you know of any others

besides your brother who have bought whiskey there?" a cunning twinkle in his eye.

"Yes, a number of them," answered Hazel, her timidity all gone now.

The sheriff seemed taken back a little by her prompt answer.

"Well, swear out a warrant and we will raid Mike's Place at once," he said.

"Swear out a warrant?" questioned Hazel blankly, "why I don't know how, and I supposed that all that was required of me was to make a complaint and that the proper officers would do the rest."

"You say that you know that Mike is selling whiskey; I don't; and we always insist that the one who does know must swear out the warrant."

Perplexed and with a feeling of discouragement and defeat, Hazel walked slowly from the sheriff's office into the main corridor of the city building.

"What shall I do now?" she asked herself. "Surely a sheriff who is sworn to enforce the prohibitory law ought not expect a girl to swear out warrants. I wonder if it is the law that the person who makes the complaint must swear out the warrant? but," clasping her hands spasmodically, "I cannot let Randolph become a common drunkard! I will not give up!"

A young man who, unobserved, had been watching her intently from a little distance down the corridor, now approached hastily and extended his hand. "Good morning, Miss Worthington," he said in a cheerful tone, "you look as if you were worrying about something. Can I be of any assistance?"

"Good morning, Mr. Watson," replied Hazel, her hand

meeting his in a somewhat hesitating manner, "I am a little worried. I have just been to Sheriff Rumples and asked him to close Mike McBlinche's rum shop, and he says that I must first swear out a warrant — and I do not know how to proceed. Do I have to do it in order to have the place raided? Is there no other way?"

Alphonso Watson hesitated for a moment as if debating the question in his own mind.

"Well," he finally said, "of course the sheriff could take out a warrant himself, but I think he usually asks the complainant to swear to it; any responsible person can do that."

Hazel hesitated for a moment while thinking quickly, "I do not want to ask Alphonso Watson's assistance or put myself under obligation to him in any way, especially since he has tried to pay me marked attention. It seems to me that he is the kind of a person who would understand it as an encouragement of his attentions. But I must save Randolph."

Aloud she said in a somewhat embarrassed manner, "You were very kind to ask if you could assist me. I will thank you very much if you will help me get a warrant for Mike McBlinche for selling rum."

"But why should a girl like you bother her head about rumselling in general or Mike's Place in particular?"

"Surely you know about — about — Randolph," with a quick intaking of the breath.

A sudden gleam, both cunning and avaricious, shone for an instant in Watson's eyes. Then he glanced nervously at the door of the sheriff's office and seemed to be considering very carefully as he stood with half averted face. Hazel thought that he was about to refuse. But the puzzled expression quickly left his face and he turned smilingly to

his companion, saying in a most cheerful voice, "Of course I will help you. Mike McBlinche must be shown that he cannot violate the law in this way, and I would do it for your sake even if I had no interest in Randolph, who you know is one of my best friends. I will go to the judge's office with you and apply for the warrant."

All the while Laurence Freeman had been sitting near the doorway of an office opening upon the corridor and had seen the meeting without, however, hearing the conversation. His gaze followed Hazel wistfully as the two passed down the corridor together. "I wonder if she will be deceived into marrying that thing?" he thought, "but it is nothing to me, I suppose, only—I'd like to see her happy and I know she can never be that with Alphonso Watson."

The bell in the sheriff's office rang sharply.

Entered a young man typical of the street tough and loafer, hands in pocket, cigar in one corner of his mouth and his cap sticking on the back of his head.

"Were you in your usual place when that girl went out, Tim?" asked the sheriff.

"Sure I was, Boss," answered Tim.

"Where did she go?"

"Quick as she come out she met that bloke that they call Al Watson. They talked fur a minnit and then steered straight fur the jedge's office."

"What?" roared the sheriff, "you don't mean that Al Watson has gone back on us?"

"I don't know, Boss," pulling industriously on his cigar, "he said as how Mike ought to be shut up and how he'd help her get a warrant!"

"Great Ceasar's ghost! but won't he put in a bad quarter of an hour when I see him!" fumed the sheriff. "But

hustle down to Mike's Place and tell him to get ready for a raid, that a warrant has been sworn out and that we will have to serve it. A hint is as good as a kick to Mike, but he'd better be out of sight himself and leave nothing but soft drinks on the bar and shelves."

"Sure!" said Tim, giving an extra hard pull at his cigar, and departed hastily on his errand.

Fifteen minutes later Hazel returned and handed the sheriff a warrant made out in due form of law.

The sheriff took it with a smile and handed it to a deputy, with a wink and a command to "serve that warrant ot once."

The morning papers contained this paragraph:

"Yesterday afternoon Deputies Smith and Jones raided the resort known as Mike's Place at 236 Raffles street. Michael was not at home to meet his visitors and the deputies found nothing but Uno beer and aerated waters, the sale of which is not contrary to the law, and so no seizure was made."

"Did Mike give you a tip, Tim?" asked the sheriff as Tim met him at the door of his office in the evening.

"Sure, he guv me a drink and said for me to thank you. He's doin' a good business to-night, Mike is; yer see the shur'ffs furgut to look under the counter. An' say, Boss, that goil's brother is down there drinkin' like a fish." And Tim winked at the sheriff and thanked him as that official handed him another cigar.

CHAPTER IV

“A COMMITTEE of ladies to see your Honor,” announced the clerk in the mayor’s office.

The mayor of Machigonne, the largest city and shire town of Landbercum county, was noted for his genial manner and “approachableness,” and answered at once, “Show them in.” Entered Hazel and two other ladies.

“Good morning! What can I do for you this bright morning?” said the mayor in his usual friendly manner.

“We are a committee representing Gresscon church,” replied Hazel, who acted as spokeswoman, “pursuant to a resolution adopted by our church meeting last evening we are here to ask you to use your authority to close the saloons in this city, which are doing business contrary to the constitution and laws of the State. We understand that it is your sworn duty, equally with the sheriff of the county, to use the police force at your command for that purpose.” Evidently Hazel had been reading some legal work, else she would have used less stilted language.

“Yes, yes!” smiled the mayor, “and do you mean to tell me that you ladies know of many places in Machigonne where liquor is sold?”

“A large number,” answered one of the ladies.

“Well! well! that is too bad! I am a temperance man myself and while of course I knew that some liquor was being sold, as it always will be, I did not think that there were many shops. I assure you that I deplore this condition as much as you possibly can and would do anything I could to prevent or relieve the misery caused by strong drink.

While, as I have said, I did not know that there were very many places selling. I have lain awake at night weeping because I could not prevent the misery caused by those few; but if, as you say, there are many, it is still greater cause for sorrow," and the mayor applied his handkerchief to his eyes.

A pleased smile rippled over Hazel's red lips and a new light sprang into her hazel eyes. "Then you will surely exercise your authority as mayor!" she said.

"I would be very glad to, my dear young lady; but it is an unwritten law that the sheriff's department should attend to all violations of the prohibitory law; and of course I do not feel that I can interfere, but let me assure you again that you have my sympathy," said his Honor, rising as if to terminate the interview.

"But the written law says that the mayor, city marshal and other city officers shall enforce the law; and it would seem to me that it would be better for you to use your authority to enforce the law during the day than to lie awake at night weeping over the misery caused by the drink traffic!" cried Hazel, the light in her eyes changing to lambent fire.

"A committee of hotel keepers to see your Honor!" announced the clerk.

As Hazel and her companions passed into the corridor they were met by Sheriff Rumpler on his way to his office in another part of the building.

"Good morning, Miss Worthington," he said with his oily smile, "I suppose you saw by the papers that we raided Mike McBlinche's place immediately after you made complaint?"

"But did not seize his liquor or arrest him," retorted Hazel angrily.

"But, my dear young lady, my officers could not find anything that was being sold in violation of the prohibitory law. So you see that you must have been mistaken in supposing that he was selling intoxicating liquors."

Before Hazel had an opportunity to reply, Alphonso Watson came rapidly along the corridor. He appeared somewhat embarrassed on seeing Hazel and the sheriff together and it appeared would have passed by pretending to be so engrossed in thought that he did not see them. But the sheriff halted him with a gruff "Good morning, Watson, I want to see you in my office."

"I will be there in a moment," replied Watson, as the sheriff turned away. Then hastily remarking to Hazel, "I am sorry that the raid on Mike McBlinche did not result in closing his place, I did the best that I could for you," he followed the sheriff into his office.

"Look here, Watson," growled the sheriff, "I'd like to know what you meant by helping that Worthington girl get out a warrant for Mike's Place? You've always pretended to be one of us and have had good pay for your work. That little job of buying votes in Ward Three was better than a month's salary, let alone the other little jobs. What d'ye mean, I say?"

"O, that's all right, Sheriff," replied Watson trying hard, but unsuccessfully, to appear at his ease, "and you'll see it in a minute. There is a whole lot of trouble brewing if you only knew it. That cranky Laurence Freeman has been exposing the political methods of the Republican party and, while the papers have refused to report his speeches, he has raised all kinds of rows in the W. C. T. Unions, the Good Templar lodges and to some extent in the churches. About two-thirds of them are down on him for a irreconcilable

crank, but there are enough voters among the other third to turn the election to a Democrat, if he can get them to vote the Prohibition ticket; and if something isn't done to make them think that you are enforcing the law, he'll sure get them to do it."

"Is that so?" asked the sheriff, somewhat mollified, "I thought we had the situation cinched, I didn't realize that that fellow Freeman had any influence. Do you mean to say that he has tumbled to the game?"

"He sure has, and he was looking on while Hazel and I were talking about the warrant business. I thought that if I didn't pretend to help and you didn't pretend to make a seizure, he'd get on to it and give the whole thing away. Hazel didn't know he was anywhere near, but I saw him out of the corner of my eye. I knew she'd never give up until she got a warrant and I'd a good deal rather help her than to have that crank do it."

"O, in love with the girl and jealous of Freeman, hey?"

"Well, you may put it that way if you like. But I didn't put up any trick on you. As soon as I could leave her I sent a message to Mike, but it seems that Tim got there first and Mike had got out when my man got there."

"That's rather playing it on the girl, isn't it?"

"Everything is fair in love, you know; and, besides, it would be a bad job for me if Mike's Place were to be shut up."

"How's that?"

"Randolph Worthington has to pass Mike's Place every morning, noon and night, and it is a pretty sure thing that he would stop drinking if it was shut up tight. His firm have tumbled to his drinking habits and have threatened to discharge him if ever he appears at the works under the influence of liquor; and if he goes I get his job, see?"

"That's killing two birds with one stone with a vengeance. I guess you are a politician all right, Watson, and we will have some work for you during the next campaign."

Harmony having thus been entirely restored, Watson went his way appearing quite elated, while the sheriff began looking over his morning mail with a complacent smile.

Meantime an interesting conversation was going on between the mayor and the committee of hotel men.

The spokesman had stated his business at once.

"I understand that some of the churches passed resolutions last evening demanding that you use the police force to enforce the prohibitory law. Now we are doing a respectable business, supplying liquors to our guests, and we want to know if we are to be interfered with."

"Well, of course you know, gentlemen," smiled the mayor, "that I am opposed to the sale of liquor, especially in low dives; and of course if much liquor is sold while I am mayor it will injure me in my church relations and hurt my chances for re-election among the radical temperance people; but I have just told a committee from one of the churches that this matter belongs to the sheriff's department and that I could not interfere."

"Right you are!" replied the hotel keeper, "we made you politically and we can unmake you mighty quick; and it won't do for you to interfere. We were afraid that you would lose your backbone and thought we would come in and see that you were doing the straight thing."

"But," said the mayor, shaking a little as he stood facing the committee, "I have told you that I am not going to interfere, then why such strong language?"

"O, that's all right!" said the spokesman as he passed out, "we simply wanted you to understand that we don't intend to stand for any wiggling in this case."

While this interesting interview was taking place, Hazel was walking hastily toward home, the angry tears in her eyes because of her utter failure to accomplish anything in the way of closing the rum shops.

Suddenly she came face to face with a very familiar figure, the second deputy marshal of Machigonne, familiarly known as "Jim Starling." He had been a friend of her father's and would, she felt sure, do anything that he could for her; moreover he was known as an honest official who tried faithfully to do his duty as laid down in the statutes.

"Yes," he replied in answer to her question, "I have a right to swear out a warrant against a rumseller and place it in the hands of a police officer to serve; but I am supposed to act by the orders of my superiors, the mayor, marshal and first deputy."

"I want a warrant against Mike McBlinche for selling rum to Randolph, but I have already been to —"

"Don't tell me that—I don't want to know whom you have been to. All I wish to know is that you have entered a complaint to me. If I had advance knowledge that you had entered a complaint higher up, it might get me into trouble for acting contrary to the wishes of my superiors. I must hurry as it is," and Starling started quickly in the direction of the judge's office.

Hazel awaited anxiously the result of Starling's effort in her behalf.

Much sooner than she expected, Patrolman Hermon, also an old acquaintance, put in an appearance.

"Good morning, Miss Hazel," he said, "it's glad I am of the chance to serve a warrant on that old sinner, Mike McBlinche."

"I thought such things were a part of your daily duties

and I have wondered more than once why you and Mr. Starling, whom I know to be thoroughly honest, have not served warrants on him long ago."

"But you see we can't do just as we like, we must act under orders — and we don't get the orders."

"But Mr. Starling said that he has the legal right to do this and, I understood, without waiting for orders."

"Sure he has, but when the boss finds out that we have done it without his orders it's ten to one that we both lose our jobs; but I mustn't talk. If we should be overheard it would mean trouble sure."

As the policeman's errand led him in the same direction as the street corner where Hazel intended to board a car for her home, she walked with him.

They had proceeded but a few blocks when they were met by the first deputy marshal.

"Where are you going?" he asked the policeman gruffly.

"To serve a warrant on Mike McBlinche."

"What for?"

"For selling rum."

"Who gave you an order to do that?"

"Deputy Starling."

"Give me that warrant and return to your duty at the station, and don't serve any more warrants of this kind without referring them to me. Jim Starling is getting altogether too fresh. He has been told several times to go slow, and it is mighty few more warrants he will get out for anyone." And taking the paper from the policeman he thrust it into his pocket and walked angrily away.

Hazel stood dumbfounded at this exhibition of contempt for the law.

"That likely means that both Starling and I have lost our

jobs," said Hermon, "but we have both been getting sick of this thing for a good while and I guess we'll feel better in private positions where we can be honest."

"But what does it all mean?" asked Hazel.

"It is said that the first deputy gets a rake-off on Mike's profits, and Mike stands in with the politicians.

"Then what is the good of the law if politicians can use it for their own selfish ends?"

"It is the best law ever made against liquor selling, Miss Hazel. The only trouble is that the politicians use it for their own ends, as you say, the same as the same politicians would use a license law. The fault is not with the law, but with the men who will not allow us to enforce it. And even at that, it is much better than any license law. Though we all know that Mike McBlinche and others in the city are selling rum, yet even Mike's Place has no display of liquors as in license cities and a stranger would hardly know it for a rum shop. My experience as a police officer has proven to me that, even under these disgraceful conditions, there is much less drunkenness and evil effects from the liquor traffic under prohibition in Maine than under license in other states and cities that I have visited from time to time."

"O, what can I do to save Randolph and other victims of this awful traffic," mused Hazel as she rode homeward, "and how can the officers of the law be forced to do their sworn duty?"

CHAPTER V

ACROSS the harbor from Machigonne rises a great hill several miles in length, its central ridge rising almost to the height of a mountain.

Laurence Freeman, weary with the fight against the illegal drink traffic and feeling the need of mental rest, had wandered one afternoon to the highest point of the hill to gaze upon the beauties of nature spread with such lavish hand around him.

Almost at his feet, it seemed, lay the beautiful city of Machigonne, washed on three sides by the waters of the bay. Near the eastern end of the city the buildings and streets were clearly defined, while toward the west it had more the appearance of a forest than a city, the trees on either side of the streets growing so thickly and so large that only the church spires and a few of the roofs of the higher buildings appeared above the mass of foliage. Nearer still lay the harbor with the great ocean-going steamers lying at their wharves, the tugs hurrying here and there, the unwieldy coal barges swinging sluggishly on their anchor chains, the white winged yachts dipping gracefully to the slight swell, and the island steamers passing in graceful movements through the water lane. In the distance lay the islands — islands as far as the eye could reach, crowned with verdure and separated by waving strips of silver threaded with lines of purple and blue. And over all just the faintest mist from the light summer shower that had passed a short half hour before, shot here and there by shimmering rainbow tints.

A road winds around the base of the hill, passing through a little village, along the high, shelving bank of the harbor,

through green meadows, then through another low lying village and out again on the farther shore where seamed and broken cliffs have for ages met the mighty onrush of the sea and giant boulders seem ready to fall from their dizzy heights. Again it dips into a beautiful tree shaded depression where the ground is soft and springy under foot, the forbidding cliffs are hidden by the trees and only glimpses of the blue sea can be caught through the foliage.

Slowly Laurence descended the mountain toward the rocky shore. A walk of a half hour or more brought him nearly to the foot of the hill, his way lying through a thick wood.

Absorbed in thought he had not noticed how nearly he had approached the carriage road until a slight sound caused him to raise his head. As his gaze took in a group of summer cottages, he was suddenly reminded that the Worthington's summer home was somewhere near. And yet he was somewhat startled to see Hazel coming toward him along the road and only a few feet distant. Turning from waving a farewell to a friend at the door of a cottage which she had evidently just left her eyes met his fully.

"Hazel — Miss Worthington," he cried involuntarily.

Her face had grown very pale and then flushed painfully. But by a very apparent effort she recovered herself and extended her hand, though in a somewhat hesitant way.

"You are not very sociable," she said. "It is a long time since you saved my life not far from this spot, but I have never had the opportunity of speaking to you. I know that you live in the city and it must be that you have purposely avoided me. Cannot you find it in your heart to forgive me?"

Laurence's eyes lighted as he listened to the eagerly spoken words and noted the embarrassment in her charming,

radiant face — and a smile curved his clean cut, sensitive lips. "I did not know that you felt that way about it," he said. "You remember that it was you who refused to speak a few years ago?"

"Yes; and I was very unkind and foolish. I realize it now. But it did seem hard that when Uncle George seemed so sure of election as State senator, you should organize the Prohibition party and get just about enough votes for your candidate to bring about the election of the Democratic candidate. Uncle was such a good man and it did seem that you were fanatical and unreasonable. It appears very foolish now, but I thought then that I must show my resentment by not speaking to you, as some of your other former friends did. Can you forgive me?"

"O, yes! fully and freely if you think there is anything to forgive. You were only a girl and I can readily understand how you felt about it when so many people much better versed in politics than a girl is supposed to be, condemned me. Your uncle was a good man and, so far as he was personally concerned, I would have been glad to have seen him elected, but he was the candidate of a political machine that had caused the most disgraceful violation of the prohibitory law and he was nominated simply to lend respectability to the ticket. Such men are used for the purpose of keeping a bad party alive. If they nominated all bad men the party would be defeated very quickly. And they know that when a good man is elected they can easily nullify any good that he may try to do. The election of a Democrat was the fortune of war — we tried to elect a Prohibition candidate regardless of either of the others.

"I do not understand politics, but I do want to be friends."

"But does this mean anything more, Hazel? You remember that though we were both so young, we had tacitly pledged ourselves to each other? Are you willing to renew that pledge?" he continued hurriedly as if fearful that he would lose courage to speak. "I have loved and longed for you all these months and years. Can I hope that you have cared a little for me, as your words to-day seem to imply?"

"Yes," softly, "I have cared—I have loved you all the while. If—if you really want me to, I will renew the understood promise, but," as if suddenly remembering something of the utmost importance forgotten, before in the sweet excitement of the moment, "there is a condition."

"I feel that I can meet almost any condition that you would require, now."

"And you will do me one little favor before I promise anything"

"Surely, I would do you a great many favors, big as well as little, even if you had not confessed that you love me—and much more so now."

"And you would give up some of your prejudices for me?"

A faint shadow crept into Laurence's fine eyes.

"Yes, if it did not involve a principle of right or wrong."

"You know how much I want the rum shops closed and Randolph saved from the habit of drinking?"

"Yes, and if the little favor is along those lines, you may be assured that I will grant it if possible."

"I read in the daily papers a while ago that there were about a thousand men in this county who voted the Prohibition party ticket at the last election."

"Yes."

"And you are chairman of the county committee?"

"Yes."

"And these men have a great deal of confidence in you and would act on your advice in political matters?"

"They have a great deal of confidence in me, but would follow my advice only so far as they would think it right."

"But if you should follow a certain course of action, many of them would think it right, especially if it really were right, and you would in that way have a great deal of influence with them?"

"Yes, if it really were right, doubtless the greater number of the party would follow me; but your question implies that there might be a difference of opinion; and what has all this to do with the little favor you wished to ask of me?"

"I want you to help me close Mike's Place."

"Surely you cannot feel the need of asking me to do that as a favor?"

"I know that you are devoting your life to the temperance cause and want the rumshops closed fully as much as I do; but I thought you might not be willing to do it in my way, for I am sure that would close them up very quickly."

"If you have an effectual plan, you may count on all the Prohibitionists helping you, but I warn you that their judgment may differ from yours as to it being the right way."

"Well, perhaps what I have to say will not be news to you, but I will tell you so that you can see what a good plan it is. In the first place, the temperance Republicans are disgusted with the way in which Sheriff Rumpler has allowed the rumshops to do business and have determined to elect a man who will close them. Mr. Wrestler has promised that he will enforce the prohibitory law faithfully and impartially. As you know, the Republican county convention has nominated him for sheriff; and the plan is to get all of the Prohibitionists and temperance Democrats to vote for him."

"And how did you become interested in this plan? You have just said that you do not understand politics."

"You know Mrs. Venters, the president of our W. C. T. U.?"

"Yes."

"Well, it is her plan and largely through her influence that he was nominated. She explained it fully at our last meeting and asked each member to pledge herself to do everything possible to bring about the election of Mr. Wrestler, urging us especially to induce our gentlemen friends to vote for him."

"I think you are entirely mistaken as to the plan having originated with Mrs. Venters. It originated, doubtless, with some wily politician, who adroitly suggested it to her in such a way that even she may think it originated in her own mind. But you have not told me what the little favor is that you wish me to do you?"

"It is only that you give up your third party for this election at least, and vote for Mr. Wrestler yourself and induce your party associates to do the same. He will close the rum-shops — I know he will; and then Randolph will be safe!"

Laurence's firm lips drooped for a moment and the light darkened in his eyes, but these were only signs of the momentary struggle taking place in his mind.

For an appreciable time he gazed fully into the beautiful face before him, taking in all its perfection of curve and line, the faint tinge of color, the light far back in the hazel eyes and even the crowning glory of her hair, as a shaft of sunshine threw its golden darts among its wavy tresses.

Then the firm lips hardened again, the eyes took on the defiant light that some of his political opponents had learned to dread when they had tried to turn him from his purpose.

But he answered very quietly and kindly, yet with a note of sadness that even his strong will could not entirely control.

"I cannot grant your little favor, Hazel," he said. "Ask me for any personal sacrifice that you will, but do not ask me to do a wrong and dishonorable thing, to play the traitor to my conscience, my party associates and, for that matter, to you; for I am quite sure that you do not realize fully what you are asking me to do."

"I understand that there is now an opportunity to close the saloons of Machigonne and save my brother and others like him; and for the lack of the votes of such men as you a good man may be defeated, his Democratic opponent be elected and the rumshops be allowed to run wide open. You know that your party cannot elect a sheriff, yet you will not try to elect a good man in another party. Don't you think that Mr. Wrestler will enforce the law? or do you think that all men but Prohibitionists are dishonest and liars?"

"To answer your last question first, I do not think that Mr. Wrestler is either dishonest or a liar; more than that, I think he will try to enforce the prohibitory law and that he cannot be bought with money. But the managers of his party do not want the law enforced. The rumsellers have money and votes and political influence and if they are not satisfied they will leave the party, thus depriving it of a large part of its campaign fund as well as of their votes and influence. The temperance people can be more easily deceived. So, no matter how honest Mr. Wrestler may be or how good his intentions, the machine will manage to prevent him from doing his full duty."

"How do you know all this? I don't see how any one or any number of men could prevent an honest man doing his duty; and if they did he would expose their dishonesty to

the people and bring about the election of honest men to fill their positions."

Laurence smiled in spite of the disappointment which he found it hard to conceal. "I see that you do not understand the intricacies of the political machine. When bribery fails there is the demand of loyalty to the party and the cry that enforcement will kill it—the very party to which the honest man owes his election. Then the lowest forms of trickery are used; and the man who is honestly trying to do his duty wonders why all his plans become known to the rumsellers and meet with complete failure. But even if the impossible should happen and your honest man be allowed to enforce the law, it would be only temporary; and the rumsellers and their friends would see to it that the next sheriff would be one to suit them."

"I cannot argue with you. You men say that women cannot see the logic of such things; but you have convinced me that you think that no one can be right but yourself; and that you do not love me so much as you do your political party. So, as you have refused to do just the one little thing that I most want you to do, I refuse to renew the old promise."

Laurence had but time to note the flush of anger on her face before she turned and left him.

Involuntarily he stretched out his hand as if to detain her, then let it drop to his side. "It is hard," he said under his breath, "to lose the girl I have always loved just when it seemed that she had gotten over her foolish, girlish pride and was sorry for the past; and even admitted that she had loved me all along. She does not understand what she asks; and there is some excuse for her because of her love for her brother. It is hard; but I could not be happy even

with her, knowing that I had been a traitor to my conscience, my friends and my God."

But as he watched her lithe form passing away between the long, straight lines of trees, her dress showing white against the deep shadows and golden bright where the sunlight touched it, there came to him a sadness and a sense of loss that he had never known before.

Restlessly he walked along the shore during the long hours of the afternoon until the dusk began to gather and the moon rose over the placid waters of the bay. The sight reminded him of Jean Ingelow's "Divided."

"I know now what it means," he said.

"We two walk on in our grassy places
On either marge of the moonlight flood,
With the moon's own sadness in our faces,
Where joy is withered, blossom and bud."

CHAPTER VI

THE county committee of the dominant party in Land-bercum county were in executive session, planning the campaign for the party nominee for sheriff.

"Yes," said the chairman in answer to a question, "we simply had to nominate Wrestler."

"But he really intends to enforce the liquor law," continued his questioner, "and how will we fix that with the boys? It seems to me that we are in for trouble. We can't afford to lose our campaign funds."

But he was interrupted by the sudden and forcible entrance of Mike McBlinche, a typical Maine rumseller, low of brow, vicious of countenance, with a look of bravado tempered by low cunning.

"See here!" he cried, "what do you mean by nominating Wrestler for sheriff? I'm here right now to tell you that I won't have it! I haven't paid you for protection for the past ten years like a little man to have you t'row me down now. You've got to tell him to decline that nomination, see!"

"Well, you have been protected, haven't you?" asked the chairman, blandly.

"Yes, I've been protected all right, but this Wrestler swears he'll put us all out of business; and I'd like to know what you mean by it? Besides, they say that you've got all them women fanatics working for him. As long as they kept to the weepin' act we could stand 'em pretty well, but they're in the vote makin' business now. And I tell you if you don't call him off I'll defeat the whole crowd of you when it comes to election day."

"Now, now, Mike," smiled the chairman, "don't get excited. It is all right. We've got to bluff the temperance people in this campaign, or there'll be trouble all around. They are so mad at Rumpler that they will all vote for the Prohibition candidate if we don't make all kinds of good promises, and if they should elect a Prohibitionist you would be out for sure."

"Sure I would," muttered Mike, "thim divils of Prohibitionists wouldn't stop at anything—and of course I'd have to go. But I didn't know it was as bad as that."

"It certainly is, Mike," continued the chairman, still smiling, "it is either Wrestler or a Prohibitionist, the way the people are feeling now."

"But he says he'll enforce the law—and he means it," growled Mike.

"Of course," said the chairman, with a chuckle, "we had to nominate a man who means it, because we couldn't get them to support one whom they might think was bluffing; Wrestler is popular with the women fanatics, as you call them, too; and we've got them all fixed to work for him tooth and nail."

"But how is all that going to help me out?" grumbled Mike, still unsatisfied.

"O, we'll fix him all right after he is elected," replied the chairman, airily, "though of course we've got to let him think now that we'll let him do as he likes. Besides we've got the county attorney and the courts, if worse comes to worse and he gets cranky and obstinate."

"And you'll give me your word of honor that I can keep right on with my business?"

"Sure you can. You may have to pay a fine of a hundred dollars, but that won't fease you."

"All right, then, I'll let her go through," and Mike turned toward the door.

"But say, Mike!" called the chairman; "this is going to be a hard campaign and we'll need a lot of money. Better give us an extra hundred this year; that will make four hundred instead of three, as you have been paying; and if you do have to pay one fine of another hundred it will only make the total five hundred, and that is a pretty low license, eh?"

"Is all this true that you've been givin' me? An' would sinsible Republicans vote fur a cranky Prohibitionist?"

"It's all true and they surely would, Mike. Our jelly-fish friends, commonly known as the better element of the Republican party, held a meeting all by themselves and decided that, if we refused to nominate Wrestler at our county convention, they would go in for all they are worth to elect the Prohibition candidate, and 'teach us a lesson,' as they said. An extra hundred will be a mighty good investment for you this year."

"I guess it's right y' are," and, shoving his hand into his pocket, Mike pulled out a great roll of bills. Counting out four hundred dollars and saying, "I'll fix it with the boys so they'll all vote for Wrestler," he passed out.

"You're a good one," laughed one of the committeemen. "Now, if you can get an equal amount from some good temperance man, the two contributions will make quite a good starter for a county campaign fund."

"O, I've done that already," answered the chairman, exhibiting another roll of bills.

"That's great," said Alphonso Watson, evidently a newly elected member of the committee, "how did you manage that?"

"O, it wasn't so hard a stunt! I went to several of the leaders of the movement in a very penitent frame of mind and admitted frankly that we had been bad in the past but now realized our political wrong-doing and were determined to do the right thing in the future, as we had proved by nominating Wrestler. I told them that the rumsellers are all going to vote for the Democratic candidate and that will defeat Wrestler and bring in a reign of free rum; and to prevent this and help us in our determination to be good, they must put their hands in their pockets and help us. That line of talk brought them around very quickly. There's a thousand dollars in that roll and more coming."

"But how about the other rumsellers?" continued Watson.

"All fixed! Mike has been away for a couple of weeks and has just returned, which explains why he wasn't fixed before."

"And how did you fix the W. C. T. U. so quickly?" asked the secretary.

Chairman Foster removed his cigar from his mouth for a moment and smiled indulgently.

"That was the easiest job of all," he said. "I had a long talk with Mrs. Venters, the president, in which I called her attention to Wrestler's strong letter and told her that we mean business this time and will surely enforce the prohibitory law to her satisfaction. I gave her a big line of talk on the Democratic resubmission and license program; and, as an extra embellishment, told her that houses of prostitution would be opened in Machigonne if the Democrats should elect their candidate for sheriff, as they were likely to do because of the rum vote, which would surely go to them. That fetched her and she at once prepared a circular

letter, urging all the members of the Unions to work from now to election for Wrestler."

"Well, we need easy marks this year," commented the secretary, "but the Prohibitionists don't come under that head, and we need their votes, too. You haven't got them dead to rights, have you?"

"No, I haven't—and that's where the rub comes. That crank, Freeman, is at the head of their committee and I was afraid to try the penitent job on him, he's too blamed sharp."

"I think I have a plan," said Watson, "that can be made to work."

"That's what we need," replied Chairman Foster, "let's hear it right now."

"I guess I'd better tell it to you privately, and then if you think it best we can put it into operation at once."

The chairman and Watson retired to a corner near the door for a few moments, after which Watson went out hurriedly.

"You fellows take your cue from me," said the chairman, as he resumed his seat, "there'll be something doing soon."

Only a few minutes had been spent in a general discussion of how to get the Prohibition party vote for Mr. Wrestler, when the door opened, admitting Alphonso Watson, accompanied by Laurence Freeman.

Chairman Foster advanced to meet Freeman, his face wreathed in smiles. "I am glad to see you, Mr. Freeman," he cried, "very glad to see you, indeed! Things are coming our way."

"I do not quite understand you," replied Laurence coolly, "nor why you sent for me. Our political opinions and methods differ so radically that I am surprised to hear that you are glad to see me, and it is quite impossible that things

should be coming your way and my way at the same time, if by things you refer to matters political."

"That is just where you are mistaken, my dear fellow," continued Foster; "we are just getting where we can properly enforce the prohibitory law, and that is just what you have been fighting for, as well as what I have desired for a long time, so it is entirely proper to say things are coming our way because we are at last going to get what we both want."

"So, you have decided to come into the Prohibition party," said Freeman with a smile.

"Well, not exactly; but we have a plan whereby we can combine our forces and bring about the same result. Of course, you have no chance to elect your man, but with your help we can easily elect ours."

"True; but your shrievalty candidates, including the present incumbent of the office, have been elected for many years by the aid of the temperance vote."

"Well, the fact is, Freeman, we've been betrayed. We haven't looked up our candidates as closely as we ought; have been careless, in fact, and haven't seen the importance of this question quite as fully as you Prohibitionists have; but, I repeat, we've been betrayed. Some of the officials whom we thought were all right turned out to be under obligations to the rumsellers for votes or financial assistance and haven't done their duty in enforcing this law. You refer to Rumpler. You are no more disappointed in him than we are. He promised that he would enforce the law and we felt sure that he would keep his promise, but he betrayed us. Frankly, Freeman, while I can't prove it and the less said about it the better, I think that Rumpler has lined his pockets well during his two terms as sheriff."

"You are doubtless in a position to know and I don't think that anyone will dispute you as regards Rumpler."

"He certainly has gone back on us," chimed in the secretary, interpreting a look from Foster.

"Right you are," added Watson, "I had to swear out a warrant against Mike McBlinche myself, and I believe Rumpler sent word in advance that the officers were coming so they wouldn't find anything."

"But all this is going to be changed," resumed Foster; "we have nominated a man this time whom we all know as an honorable business man, and everyone who knows him is sure that when Wrestler says a thing he means it."

"That's right!" came as one voice from the committee.

"How about your candidat or county attorney and the court?" queried Freeman.

"While our candidate for county attorney has not come out in a public statement, he has assured me that he will vigorously prosecute any and all cases that the sheriff brings to his attention. Of course we cannot control the judge, as he is appointed by the governor, but I assure you he will do his duty. After all, it depends almost entirely on the sheriff and it is Rumpler's fault that the judge hasn't done better in the past."

"And what do you wish of me?"

"Simply to explain the matter to your people; show them that, while there is no possible chance for them to elect their candidate, there is a splendid opportunity to secure just what they want, the real thing in enforcement, by voting for our man. The rumsellers are against him to a man, and if we don't get your votes the Democratic candidate will be elected; and you know what that will mean—free rum!"

"A burned child dreads the fire. I will advise my friends,

but will advise them to vote for their own candidate instead of having him withdraw in favor of yours, as of course that is a part of your plan."

"Of course that would be necessary ; but you appear as if you thought we were not honest in this matter."

"Frankly, I do not think you are."

"It pains me to think that you should feel so, Freeman, and I suppose that you have had some reason for thinking so in the past ; but I am going to show you right now that we mean what we say. If you will get your man to withdraw and will have your committee fill the vacancy by nominating Wrestler in his place, we will see that Wrestler appoints you as one of his liquor deputies. This isn't an attempt to buy you," hastily, "we know you too well for that, even if we did not consider it dishonest ; but it is simply to put you in a place where you can do yourself what you want done, that is, enforce the law yourself."

Laurence Freeman paused for a moment before replying. He saw how, if he should accept this offer, he would gain the approval of nearly all of the temperance people in all parties. To them it would appear to be a wise and patriotic thing to do. Only a small number, and those a few of his own party associates, the real party Prohibitionists having the wisdom to see that a victory of that kind would be worse than a defeat, would disapprove of such a course. And Hazel Worthington would be glad and would think that he did it for her sake ; he could claim her once more, feel the clasp of her hand in his, read the love messages in her eyes—

"I decline your offer," he said shortly.

Chairman Foster looked perplexed. The slight hesitation in Freeman's manner had evidently led him to think that his proposal would be accepted.

"Wait just a moment," he said, and going to the side of the secretary he held a moment's whispered conversation with him, returning to Freeman at once.

"Freeman," he said, "we have all the better element of the Republican party on our side and the W. C. T. U. and other temperance societies as well. No one is holding off but your people, but there are enough license men in our own party to defeat us and elect a Democrat unless you people come to our help. Now we not only offer you a position as deputy sheriff to enforce the liquor law, but we will also appoint any other man to serve with you whom you may choose."

"Your offer is declined," replied Freeman firmly. "I would not support your candidate and party if you would give me the appointment of all the deputies that the county is entitled to. Aside from the question of betraying my party and my principles, I would be absolutely under the control of the sheriff; and, if the past is any criterion by which to judge the future, the sheriff will be under the control of your committee and yourself. I would have the responsibility but not the power; and the failure of a Prohibitionist to enforce the law to the letter would make splendid ammunition with which to fight my party in future conflicts, when it shall have been seen that Wrestler's administration is a failure from an enforcement standpoint." And Freeman ended the interview by quickly passing out.

"What's to be done now?" asked Alphonso Watson blankly.

"Here's my prescription," said the secretary. "Get the leading temperance Republicans, W. C. T. U. workers, as many Good Templars as possible, to make it their business to see the Prohibitionists personally and sound the praises

of Wrestler, telling especially how he is at odds with the rum element of his own party. Then as fast as one Prohibitionist is converted get him to repeat all this to his friends. We can't get them all, but by telling them what a splendid opportunity this is to get a strict and impartial enforcement of the law, we can pull the wool over the eyes of a good many of them.

"Good boy!" cried Foster; "I hear no objection and so we will consider this plan adopted by unanimous consent, work to begin immediately. The meeting is adjourned."

CHAPTER VII

ONE Saturday afternoon about three weeks after the newly elected county officials had taken over the various offices, Laurence Freeman was walking along one of the less frequented streets of Machigonne. He had not seen Hazel since their meeting in the summer and was thinking somewhat sadly of the hard fate that obliged him to choose between love and duty.

The campaign had been a hard fought one, but Mr. Wrestler had been elected sheriff by a larger majority than any other man on the Republican party ticket. All of the various temperance societies had united in supporting him and he had drawn a large number of votes from the Prohibition party, though some had withstood arguments, taunts and abuse for standing by their principles, feeling confident that the ultimate result would show that they were right in not supporting a good man in a bad party.

Hazel Worthington stepping quickly from a house where she had been calling almost fell against him as her foot slipped on the last step above the sidewalk.

A wave of color swept over her sensitive face and left it pale and cold, with an expression of sadness in her eyes like the reflection of the sadness that she instantly saw in his. She passed with a curt "Good afternoon." Whether this action was caused by embarrassment or a desire to be unfriendly, Laurence could not determine. Not used to reading women's hearts, he did not know how her heart fluttered because of the unexpected meeting, nor of the conflict between love and pride in her own ideas of right that was going on in her mind continually. Neither could he realize that

the thing that was so clearly right to him might appear an evidence of obstinacy, and a foolish waste of effort, to her, and even a lack of love that is willing to sacrifice.

Love conquered for the moment and she turned and held out her hand, but pride seemed in the ascendency again when she spoke :

"I see you have a paper in your hand, have you been reading the account of the seizure at Mike's Place?"

"Yes."

"And now that Mr. Wrestler is elected and has immediately made a seizure at the most notorious place in the city, I suppose you are prepared to apologize and admit that, for once, you were mistaken in opposing him and I was right in working for his election?"

"I am always ready to apologize for a wrong or a mistake, but it is far from being proven yet that I either did wrong or was mistaken in this case. Mr. Wrestler has been sheriff for only three weeks, and his party managers realize that he must make a good showing at first."

"But in these three weeks he has raided Mike's Place twice — and a number of others."

"But Mike's trial on the second seizure had not occurred yet — it would be well to await the outcome before being sure that we are to get a strict enforcement."

"You are such an obstinate fellow! Don't you know it is wicked to be so lacking in faith?"

"In God, yes, but the great trouble with the temperance cause in Maine is that the temperance people have too much faith in the promises of political bosses."

"But this being the second seizure Mike will have to go to jail, will he not? Mrs. Venters said he would because the law provides a jail sentence in such cases."

"Mrs. Venters is correct as regards the law; but Mike will not go to jail. That depends upon the county attorney and the court, and it is not the plan of the political managers to send any of the rumsellers to jail at this time."

"O, you are incorrigible. If only you wouldn't be so obstinate about this I — could — could —"

"You could do what, Hazel?" he asked stepping toward her, a deep note of tenderness in his voice.

"Nothing!" she cried, an angry flush mounting to her brow. "You care more for what you call principle than you do for me! And why should I want to do anything?" And without waiting for an answer she turned and walked hastily away. "Jim" Starling, meeting her a short distance from where Laurence was standing, wondered as he spoke to her why there were tears in her eyes and why her voice trembled; but he was wise enough not to ask questions.

And if Laurence had been as well versed in the ways of women as he was in the wiles of politicians, he would have known that Hazel was suffering as well as he.

But in a moment he was shaking hands cordially with Starling.

"I was sorry to learn that you and Hermon both lost your jobs a while ago," he said, "though I suppose honest men are not sorry to be independent of politicians. Just what was the reason for your discharge?"

"The mayor said that the reason was because I had directed Hermon to arrest a man who was continually interfering with the work of the firemen when that big wholesale store was burned a while ago. But when I met Mike McBlinche in the street the next day after Hermon and I were discharged, he shook his fist in my face and said: 'When I say a man has been an officer in this burg long

enough, he goes! See?' And he related the incident of the warrant secured for Mike McBlinche.

"By the way, Freeman," he continued, "I have not felt it necessary to advertise the fact that I voted the Prohibition ticket at the last election and so the bosses are not afraid of me as they are of you. This morning I stepped into Chairman Foster's office, apparently for a friendly chat, but in reality to get some idea of what the enforcement game is under Wrestler."

Foster asked me to step into the private office while he saw a lady client to the door. Returning he stopped to gather up some papers from the table, when the door was thrown violently open and Mike McBlinche rushed in, his face purple with rage and his breath coming in snorts like that of an enraged hog."

"See here, Boss!' he bellowed, 'you told me that if I would work for Wrestler I would have to pay only one fine a year.'"

"That is correct,' responded the chairman, with his bland smile, 'you haven't paid more than one, have you?'"

"No, but Wrestler's deputies came down on me again last night without any notice and seized two hundred and fifty dollars worth of my good stuff, and I had to give bail for my appearance in court to-morrow morning. Now if you've gone back on your promise I want to know it, and I'll defeat the whole party at the next election.'"

"What,' cried Foster, startled out of his usual bland composure, 'has he raided you a second time?'"

"Has he?' growled Mike, 'and didn't you see the papers?'"

"No, I haven't seen a paper, in fact just arrived in town. But I told him when he first began to enforce the law dis-

creetly; and I supposed that he would understand what that meant and be satisfied with raiding each place once. But don't worry, Mike,' he said soothingly, returning to his bland manner, 'we'll fix that with the county attorney. You'll have no fine to pay and your stuff will be returned.'"

"Well, you just see that it is fixed all right, or the Republican party will get all that's coming to it. You know what I can do; and I'll sure turn the whole thing over to the Democrats if it don't come out straight as you tell me.'"

And Mike, having great confidence in the chairman's ability to "fix things," walked out considerably mollified.

Other incidents of the new regime were well known to both Freeman and Starling.

Sheriff Wrestler had began a series of raids on the rum-sellers immediately after entering upon the discharge of his duties. Mike McBlinche and a dozen more notorious offenders were put upon trial. One attorney was engaged to defend them all; and it was evident to the hangers on in the municipal court that there was an understanding between them and the political bosses that all of them should be convicted. This followed as a matter of course; and each rum-seller promptly paid his fine of one hundred dollars and costs.

After the session of court had adjourned, one rumseller who had not been under arrest, stepped up to the clerk's desk and tendered one hundred dollars.

"What is that for?" asked the clerk.

"To pay my fine."

"But you have not been sentenced to pay a fine, you have not even been under arrest."

"That don't make any difference, I ought to have been, and I want to pay my fine all the same; I want the protection."

And the clerk searched until he found a record of three years before, showing that this man had been sentenced to pay a fine of one hundred dollars for a former offence and that the sentence had been suspended; and so took his money.

But the saloons were only closed during the session of the court; and as soon as it had adjourned business was going on again with no change except that a few closed their front doors and did business from the side or back door as the case might be.

The preachers praised Sheriff Wrestler from their pulpits, the churches and the temperance societies generally passed resolutions approving highly of his work, and the local W. C. T. U. appointed a committee consisting of Hazel and two other ladies to present their congratulations in person.

A few days later when passing the bulletin board of one of the daily papers Hazel saw that Mike McBlinche had appeared in court for his second trial but that the case had been dismissed by the county attorney without hearing any evidence.

"I wonder if Laurence was right, after all?" she mused as she walked along the city street toward her home, "but he ought to do as I want him to—or at least one would think he would do what I ask him to, if he loves me as he said he does. But I don't believe I'd like him so well if he did give up what he calls his principles to please me. O dear, it is all an awful tangle to me—what is right and what is wrong? But I love him anyway."

Her way led past "Mike's Place" and she noticed as she approached that it appeared just as it had for several years. Wooden partitions had been built about three feet back from the windows and, in addition, the curtains were drawn in

such a way that they hid completely the interior of the room, except the part already hidden by the partitions. About four feet inside the outer doors were swinging doors so arranged as to shut out any view of the room from the street even when the outer door was open to allow customers to pass in or out. A casual observer, especially if from a license city, would not suspect it to be a rum shop and, if informed, would wonder how any business could be done under such conditions of secrecy.

A young man, leaning carelessly against the side of the building, scrutinized Hazel closely as she approached and, raising one foot, pressed his heel apparently against the wall. Almost instantly a number of men came out hurriedly and separated as soon as they reached the street. The young man had pushed an electric bell button with his heel and Mike had had warning that some undesirable person was showing an interest in the shop. Hazel was sufficiently familiar with the illegal drink traffic to know the meaning of this and was very sure that Mike had quickly deposited his "hard liquors" in a convenient "hide." She was a little amused for a moment to think that a girl could frighten a rumseller without even attempting to enter his shop; but her amusement was turned to sadness when she saw that her brother Randolph was among the men who had come out so hastily. She perceived at once that he was partially intoxicated. His linen was soiled, his clothing wrinkled and dirty; and altogether he had lost that indefinable something that distinguished a gentleman, though still trying to appear polite and dignified.

He had paused to exchange low stories with a man who had apparently fallen a step or two lower than himself, as Hazel approached.

"O Randolph!" Hazel cried, "I am so sorry! I was in hopes that after McBlinche was arrested his rumshop would be closed for good and that you would go home to your wife and children without the smell of liquor on your breath."

"O, Evelyn won't mind," answered Randolph thickly, "I've got a bottle of ale for her. But, say, Hazel, you're getting a little too cranky about this thing—I just take a little when I'm tired and need it."

"We cannot talk here," said Hazel. "Come home with me."

"All right, Hazel," and he linked his arm with hers and walked just a little unsteadily along the street.

"Say, Hazel," Randolph continued, "I saw Laurence Freeman to-day and he looked sort of glum. I wonder if it is because you turned him down and have been about with Alphonso Watson so much?"

"O, I guess not," answered Hazel with a blush. "I don't think he cares so much for me after all; he wouldn't vote for Mr. Wrestler when I asked him to, and that doesn't look as if he wished very much to please me."

"But you did turn him down?"

"Yes, I did," angrily; "but never mind that now. I want you to stop drinking, and I believe you could if you did not have to pass that horrid place several times a day. And I was so sure that Sheriff Wrestler would close it up, though Laurence insisted that he couldn't do so, no matter how hard he might try."

"Yes, I think I could stop and never touch the stuff if I didn't have to smell it every day and many times a day. I voted and worked for Wrestler, hoping that he would close every rumshop in the city; but I guess Laurence is right after all and the party bosses won't let him do it."

"But won't you try to stop drinking and go around some other way when you go to and from your work?"

"I'll try, Hazel, but the men who frequent Mike's Place are my friends and daily companions and it is hard to refuse their invitations."

Nevertheless, on reaching home, he handed Evelyn the bottle of ale.

"O, Evelyn, please don't drink that stuff!" cried Hazel; "it will make you drunk."

"Nonsense," replied Evelyn, laughing, "the doctor prescribed it for my stomach trouble," and she filled a glass and drank it eagerly.

Hazel lay awake all that night, sometimes sobbing softly and at others thinking, thinking, thinking. Her brother and his wife both likely to become drunkards, and every effort that she had made to save them proving a failure. Could it be possible that Laurence was right after all and the election of a sheriff pledged to the enforcement of the prohibitory law was not enough? Surely it seemed so. But, on the other hand, were all the good people who had supported Sheriff Wrestler, including Mrs. Venters and the W. C. T. Unions, mistaken?

And in either case, why had she treated Laurence so cruelly when she loved him so?

CHAPTER VIII

WHILE Hazel lay worrying over the sad situation confronting her, a stormy meeting of the Republican county committee was in session. The sheriff and the leading members of the committee were present, but the younger members and those known to be strongly in favor of enforcement, especially from the country towns, had evidently not received notice.

The chairman with his bland smile presided.

"Why did you make those second raids, especially on Mike's Place?" he asked the sheriff.

Sheriff Wrestler had been greatly surprised at receiving an imperative summons to attend an evening session of the county committee and at the evidently hostile attitude of his political friends. So he replied slowly, showing some embarrassment in voice and manner:

"I don't think I quite understand your question, gentlemen. It is my duty, as I understand my oath of office, to enforce the prohibitory law to the best of my knowledge and ability; and I intend to raid the rumshops until I put them out of business."

"But, you will remember, I told you when you first began that we expected you to enforce the law *discreetly*."

"I remember your words, but you did not explain what you meant by them."

"Then to be perfectly plain, Wrestler," still with the bland smile, "you are showing too much zeal and not enough discretion. It is the plan of this committee to have the sheriff raid the rumshops, and find the goods once, or, at most, twice in a year. The fines help to pay the expenses of the

county, and it is much better than to attempt the impossible feat of shutting them up altogether."

"But you nominated me after I had pledged myself to enforce the law against liquor selling, and you continually urged me to make it strong in my campaign speeches."

"It is very evident that you are not a politician, Wrestler," the bland smile showing a pitying condescension, "that was absolutely necessary to success. Without it we would have lost the votes of many of the temperance men in our party and could not have gained the support of the Prohibitionists or the W. C. T. U."

"Then," hesitatingly, "you do not expect me to keep my oath of office?"

"Of course we do, but we want you to do it *discreetly*; you are not a rich man and, as it is impossible to close the saloons, it is better to regulate them and get your pay for doing so. The breweries in other states stand ready to pay you a fair commission on all ale and beer sold in the city. This is not like whiskey and the other strong drinks; and you can still keep your oath of office by regulating the sale in this way and make a dollar for yourself."

"But the law prohibits the sale of ale and beer as well as whiskey, though for that matter all the places that I raided the second time were selling whiskey — and besides I am no bribe taker."

The hesitation and embarrassment had disappeared and Wrestler spoke in a strong, even voice.

"This is merely a matter of business," continued the chairman, "and what your predecessors have done and successors will do. But if you are thin-skinned about turning an honest dollar, think of the effect that this will have on the party that elected you."

"You have just said that it was necessary that I promise enforcement in order to be elected; and if so, why should nullification be necessary to save the party?"

"Because the liquor dealers furnish the sinews of war and they and their friends control enough votes to hold the balance of power; and if we can't hold both the rum vote and the temperance vote of our party it is a gone goose in this county."

"I don't see that all this absolves me from my oath."

"Wrestler, this is rank ingratitude. We made you politically and at our first attempt to get you to run your office in the interest of the party, you meet us with open rebellion."

"Was it your intention from the beginning to force me to obey the orders of this committee?"

"It was the expectation of your friends on this committee that you would follow out our wishes as some recognition of of what we have done for you."

The other members of the committee had listened to the colloquy between the chairman and the sheriff without interrupting until this time. But as the sheriff paused, with downcast face and twitching lips, Alphonso Watson broke in hastily:

"Look here, boys," he said, "we don't want any of this ramrod enforcement; it don't give a good man any show. Now I know of a fellow who holds down a good job. He is foreman of the Tontine Stove Foundry. Just now he is drinking quite hard and if ever he goes into that foundry drunk, he loses his job and I get it. I'm a better man than he is and deserve it; but he has told me more than once that if Mike's Place was closed up tight he could cut out the booze quick. Now I say let Mike's Place run and let such fellows as him get the bounce and give us other fellows a chance."

"It seems to me that the argument is in favor of enforcement," said the sheriff, "but I must confess that I have seen more light on the question to-night than ever I have before."

"I thought you would see things in the right light after a little confidential conversation," said the chairman, smiling more blandly than ever. "Now what we want you to do is to make two or three raids a day, so that the temperance people will see that something is being done. But it is not necessary to take all the stock on hand, especially if you have to search for it; and there is no need of taking the owners or bar keepers into court, except once or twice a year, so as to get the fines that it is only fair they should pay. Other people have to pay taxes and it is only fair that rumsellers should pay their share."

"You misunderstand me," said the sheriff, "I did not mean that I would accept your proposals. Had I been aware that I was expected to be simply the tool of a committee who does not want the law enforced, I would never have attempted to get the office; but now that I am sheriff I shall enforce the law to the best of my knowledge and ability." He spoke in a voice that trembled slightly and there were signs in his face of a hard struggle.

The chairman's face hardened and a steely glitter came into his eyes, though the bland smile still curved his lips.

"You may retire, Mr. Wrestler," he said curtly.

And the sheriff passed quietly out into the night.

"That's open rebellion," said Watson as the door closed.

"What's to be done now, chairman?"

"We've simply got to bring that fellow to his senses," answered the chairman. Using the desk telephone, he called a "Mr. Smith" and said: "Send Tim up at once."

"He's in bed," came the reply.

"It doesn't matter if he is, send him here at once," and the chairman laid aside the 'phone and began to talk jovially with Watson.

"So you're looking for Randolph Worthington's place?" he asked.

"How do you know?" asked Watson, "I didn't mention any names.

"Sure you didn't, but I caught on just the same. How will the pretty sister like that?"

"She doesn't know anything about it and I intend to be blame careful that she don't."

"Well, Watson, I guess you are a better politician than I took you for. A man who can cut out a fanatical Prohibitionist like Freeman, with his best girl and at the same time cut the girl's brother out of a job, is certainly all right for a county committee man."

In a short time "Tim," the typical street tough who had served Sheriff Rumpler so well, put in an appearance, rubbing his eyes and yawning.

"We've got a job for you, Tim," said the chairman, "and it will keep you good and busy."

"Anything in it?"

"Two dollars a day."

"Aint there any booze?"

"Not much, this requires a wide awake fellow; but I suppose we can give you a check on Mike for two drinks a day if you do a good job."

"All right, I'm your man. What's the job?"

"To watch Sheriff Wrestler, find out where and when he intends to make raids and give our friends warning when he intends to raid any place. I will agree with them on a signal. The word "blow" will be as good as any, and when

you call by telephone just say "blow" and give the hour when he is likely to make the raid."

"All right, Boss, but you know I can't get much around the sheriff's office, they don't like me."

"That is all right; you are to do the work on the streets and I will have another man for the inside work. Now go and tell Mike and as many of the others as you can find to-night and to-morrow morning that there is trouble and that they had better keep a look out for a few days. That will do now, Tim."

When Tim had passed out, the chairman turned to Watson.

"The next thing to do," he said, "is to get one or two of Wrestler's deputies on the string and have them post us as to Wrestler's intentions. That is, when he or one of the deputies swears out a warrant, our man must be informed of it so that Tim can give the warning before he can have it served."

"I know just the man to touch," said Watson, "that's Jones. He is a little relation to Wrestler and he thinks Jones is as honest as the day is long. I'll see him the first thing in the morning and arrange to have him give us the tip every time. Twenty-five dollars once in a while will fix him all right."

"Well, then that is all settled, and I'm sleepy; let's adjourn to bed."

So the meeting adjourned; and neither the temperance voters who had supported Sheriff Wrestler, nor the general public ever knew that such a meeting had been held.

CHAPTER IX

RANDOLPH WORTHINGTON staggered into the room where Hazel was sitting with his wife and threw himself heavily into a chair. Evelyn did not seem to be much disturbed by his appearance, but Hazel cried out sharply, and pulled a chair close to him. "What is the matter, Randolph?" she asked.

"Matter enough," he replied, thickly. "I've been discharged."

"On — on — account of the — the drink?"

"That's what the boss said. He accused me of spoiling a lot of work and misusing my power as foreman and making trouble among the men. Of course he blamed it to the booze, and rubbed it in by telling me that he had warned me several times that I must cut it out if I wanted to hold my job. But it is my opinion that your friend Watson was at the bottom of the whole thing. He has been trying to get my job for a long time and now he's got it. You made a bad bargain when you traded Freeman off for him."

"I wonder if he could have been so mean as to plot against you?" said Hazel, sadly. "He always seemed kind and did what he could to help me when I tried to have Mike's Place closed."

"Sure! and he was hand in glove with Foster and Mike and all the rest of that gang all the time, and planning to get my job."

"And I was so in hopes that Sheriff Wrestler would put Mike out of business. I am sure you could have stopped drinking if it hadn't been for that horrid place."

"Sure I could, Sis."

"But you have been drinking now, and, O Randolph, you are drunk!"

"That's right, Sis, I'm drunk. There's nothing for it now but to keep drunk or throw myself off the wharf."

"O, no, you won't do that Randolph, we will save you yet!" and then to herself, "It is such a hopeless task trying to get the officers to close those joints;" and she rapidly reviewed in her mind the events of Sheriff Wrestler's administration, now nearing its close.

She had had frequent interviews with "Jim" Starling, who had kept her well informed as to what was occurring, nearly always managing to drop a word favorable to Laurence Freeman, so that she knew more of the inside political workings than many of the Republican party voters, for Starling was an adept at procuring political information — to be used later by Laurence Freeman.

It had appeared from Starlings reports, at various times, that on the day following the night session of the county committee, previously described, Mr. Wrestler had attempted to show his independence by personally procuring another warrant for Mike McBlinche and putting it into the hands of two of his best deputies to serve. Very much to their surprise, for they thought that they would take him entirely unawares and "catch him with the goods," they found the door locked and Mike standing on the street corner, hands in pockets and a big pipe in his mouth.

"How is it that you are not doing business this morning, Mike?" one of the deputies had asked.

"I've gone out of business," Mike had responded nonchalantly, blowing a great cloud of smoke from his mouth.

"That's hard to believe, Mike," the deputy had responded, "I guess there is some liquor in there."

"Nothing but soft drinks; but if you don't believe me here's the key — look for yourselves."

The deputies had entered the building and made quite a thorough search, but had found nothing seizable under the law.

Yet in fifteen minutes after they had passed from sight Mike was again doing business. "The stuff," so Starling had said, had been hidden in a cleverly constructed hide in a nearby building, and of course Mike had received warning of the deputies' intended visit in time to carry his small stock there and hide it from inquisitive eyes. For Mike, like others in the same business, left the bulk of each consignment of liquors in the express company's charge, addressed to a fictitious name, and called for a few bottles at a time as needed. This was necessary even under political protection for, unlike a license law, trouble was liable to occur under the prohibitory law at any time, and some zealous citizen could often make the officials do their duty against their will.

Similar conditions were found to exist at the other places where liquors were sold. Where seizures had been made once, the rumsellers were prepared for a second visit, watchers being always on duty near the doors and hides made ready to quickly receive the liquors. But even under these conditions a goodly number of arrests were made during the first few months. But when a rumseller appeared in court who had previously paid a fine, he escaped punishment entirely or at most paid another fine of one hundred dollars. Frequently the county attorney would not prosecute the case, usually giving no reason at all, but sometimes claiming that

there was not evidence enough to convict and that it would be only a waste of time to try it. In some instances the rumsellers would give one name to the officers and another to the court when their cases were presented, and they would be discharged on the ground that the warrant was drawn against the wrong party. When it was thought useless to deny their identity entirely they would claim that their middle initial was different from that in the warrant — and be discharged.

For a long time the sheriff was puzzled to know how it happened that his plans were so fully known and why he could make no progress towards closing the joints, but after the chairman of the county committee had said to him one day, "You see, Wrestler, it don't pay to rebel against your maker," he saw plainly that his party machine was defeating his efforts at every turn. Though feeling sure that some of his deputies had been tampered with, he did not suspect Jones.

The result was that he soon became discouraged and his administration of the sheriff's office was but little better than Rumpler's. He was a disgraced man in the eyes of the best men who had helped to elect him; for they were equally ignorant of tricks played upon him and the power and disposition of the other officials to bring his efforts to naught. He was openly accused of accepting bribes from the rumsellers and consenting to the illegal traffic for the sake of future political advancement. But a mistaken sense of loyalty to his party and a lack of moral courage prevented him giving the public the real reason for his failure.

And now another heated political campaign was in progress. The Democrats, taking advantage of Republican trickery to defeat the purpose of the prohibitory law, in-

veighed loudly against the law itself, advocating its repeal in order that a license law might be passed. Their only argument was Republican nullification, but so little was known by the voters at large of the underhand methods employed to bring the law into disrepute that a few honest people came to agree with the rabble that license might be better—but they were people who had had no intimate experience with the operation of license laws. The Democrats had nominated a candidate for sheriff on this platform though with no hope of electing him. The Republicans had nominated a man who they claimed to the temperance people would enforce the law, but whose pledges were not so strong as had been those of Wrestler. And the Prohibitionists had nominated Laurence Freeman.

“O dear,” sighed Hazel, “it is all a muddle to me; and I can’t understand why men should do such mean things in the interest of the rummies for the sake of what money or political influence they can gain by it. I do wish Laurence could be elected sheriff of this county. I always thought he was cranky and unreasonable, but I now believe he is right.”

Randolph roused himself from a semi-stupor and attempted to leave the house, but Hazel, fearing that he would do himself some harm, induced him to lie down upon a sofa in the room and bathed his head with cold water until he fell asleep. Feeling that he was now safe and that it would be unwise to try to awake him and get him to his room, she and Evelyn retired for the night. But when she arose at about midnight and went to the sitting room to see if she could do anything further for him, he was missing.

She had just made a rapid search of the house when the door bell rang. It was “Jim” Starling who had rung the

bell, but as soon as Hazel opened the door she saw an ambulance in the street.

"O, what is the matter?" she cried.

"A little accident," Starling replied, soothingly. "Randolph was struck by a passing train and hurt somewhat. Laurence and I happened to be returning from a political meeting at just the nick of time to pick him up."

Very carefully he and Laurence carried the injured man into the house. His left leg was very badly crushed and the surgeon had already told him that it would have to be amputated.

Both Laurence and Starling had seen Randolph deliberately throw himself in front of a moving train and knew that it was an attempt to commit suicide. They had rushed to the spot and dragged him nearly off the track before the train was upon him, but not in time to prevent it passing over his leg. But of course they did not tell Hazel this.

CHAPTER X

ON the day that Randolph Worthington was first able to move about the room with the aid of a crutch and Hazel's willing arm, the morning papers told of the election of Laurence Freeman to the office of sheriff of Landbercum county. The result of the election, so the paper stated, was entirely unexpected to the managers of both the old parties and, for that matter, to the Prohibitionists themselves. The result of the Democratic campaign for license was the loss of more than fifteen per cent of their vote to the Prohibition party candidate, while the Republican policy of nullification had cost that party about sixty per cent of their total vote.

"I wish this had happened two years ago, Sis," said Randolph as he laid aside the paper. "If he had been elected two years ago, instead of Wrestler, I would have two good legs now."

"Then you are sure that he will close the rum shops. O won't that be good! And when you go on the street again you will be safe."

"Yes, I am very sure that I can leave the stuff alone with the rum shops shut up. I can resist the temptation when I would have to hunt in some back alley for a pocket peddler or dig it out of a garbage heap. But Freeman will have a hard row to hoe with all the other county officials and the court against him. If they had filled all the offices with Prohibitionists, Machigonne would be dryer than Sahara. But all Freeman can do is to seize the liquors, arrest the rumsellers and put them before the court; the county attorney and the judge will do the rest."

On the day that Laurence Freeman entered upon his duties as sheriff the door of every rum shop in the city was locked, including that occupied by Mike McBlinche. But the genial Mike, not quite realizing the change that had taken place and still relying on the help of Chairman Foster, had constructed a new and very complicated "hide" and had instructed his customers to come in through a dark alley to the back door.

But when, a week later, Chairman Foster returned to the city from a vacation trip to New York, the first man to come to his office was Mike McBlinche—and a very troubled looking Mike he was.

"What's the matter now, Mike?" asked the chairman. The bland smile was not so much in evidence and there was a nervous twisting of the lips that none of his associates had seen before.

"Matter enough," growled Mike. "This new Prohibition sheriff landed on me the first ground hop. I had the stuff hid where Wrestler's men would never have found it if they had hunted a year; but that devil of a Freeman caught on and scooped the stuff and me too."

"You expected that with a Prohibition sheriff, didn't you?"

"Yes, I wasn't none surprised. But instead of telling me to come into court in the morning, they took me along with them and I had to give bail to keep from being locked up. And in the mornin' I had to pay me fine, because I was afraid that if I appealed to the superior court Freeman would get the judge to jail me, seems as if he has more influence there than in the city court. But that isn't all of it. I had another lot of stuff hid under a pile of straw in my stable. Last night I told Tim to bring it up so we could work it off to the men who go to work early, before the

deputies get around. Tim brought it up all right and I tipped him he had a cinch to sell it out while the deputies were in court givin' their evidence against me. And what did that devil of a sheriff do but send two more deputies to arrest Tim. They crep' 'round corners and got close to the door and jumped him just as he was pourin' out a glass. So of course they got him and the stuff and brought him right in while I was there. Then they postponed his trial till to-morrow and I had to put up cash bail for him. And them two deputies! who wuz they but Starlin' and Hermon that we had fired fur trying to interfere with my business that time!"

"Well, that was rather hard."

"Hard nuttin! That aint a thing to what they done to me while you wuz away. I kep' the front door locked and fixed a beam against the back door so the divil himself couldn't break it in. An' then I made a hole in the brick wall an' passed the drinks out, lettin' me customers drink in the alley; and blamed if them divils didn't git into the cellar an' Freeman got onto Starling's shoulders an' crawled up through a trap door in the floor behind the counther. I never saw the divil at all; an' jist as I was takin' a bottle to the hole in the wall, he grabbed me by the laigs and t'rowed me down. They got me into court agin an' I tried to get the county attorney to let me off the same as he used to. He said he'd like to, but everybuddy knew the sheriff was onto his job an' he didn't dare do it. He said that Freeman had all the temperunce people behind him an' not a solitary man voted for him that had any interest in the rum business. Then I tried the jedge an' he dassen't either, an' blame if he didn't hold me for the superior court."

"I guess they've sure got it in for you, Mike."

"An' that aint all of it neither. What d'ye spose them two divils, Starlin' an' Hermon done while Freeman was totin' me up to the police station?"

"I don't know, what did they do?"

"They left the beam against the back door the same as I left it an' fastened the iron shutters on the inside. Then, as near as I can find out, they nailed the trap door down, put out the fire, turned all the faucets in the place till the floor was covered with about four inches of water mixed with the sawdust. Tim was hangin' 'round to see what wuz goin' on an' they made him give up his key, an' took mine off the nail, cum away, after lockin' the front door, an' the water is froze into a solid block of ice — it must be, it's bin so cold. An' I can't git into me own shop. Now I want to know what are you goin' to do about it?"

"Not a blame thing," replied the chairman disconsolately. The Prohibitionists nominated Freeman and they and the temperance people elected him, and we haven't a string on him anywhere."

"Can't we buy him?" I've got a thousand to put into it."

"No, we can't buy him," replied the chairman petulantly. "You don't think we would let things go this far without trying, do you? And we can't scare him, for those fanatical Prohibitionists won't scare any more than the old martyrs, and we can't talk to him about sticking to the party that elected him, because the party didn't elect him. Besides, his own party would be down on him like a thousand of brick if he should let up on you fellows a feather weight. So you see he has the same reason for enforcing the law that our men had for not enforcing it — the party would fire them in either case."

Mike McBlinche has always regarded the chairman as almost omnipotent in political matters and in his ability to protect rumsellers; and this reply brought a settled gloom over the red, repulsive features.

"Can't you do nuthin' a tall?" he pleaded. "Can't you fix it with the county attorney and the judge? They're both in the good old party, aint they?"

"Yes, they're in the party yet and of course we will give them their instructions to hamper the sheriff all they can while making believe they're helping him. But you see that the temperance people are so mad with us that if they don't follow the law pretty close there will be an all-fired row and the whole crowd of us will be dumped into the soup at the next election. The fact is I'm discouraged, Mike, and I guess the safest thing for you to do is to close up shop. There's no doubt that Freeman is hot after your scalp; and for that matter the scalps of all the rest of the dealers."

"Well, I've got a few more tricks to play and I want you to try to fix things with the county attorney so that if he catches me again I won't have to go to jail. But I feel it in my bones that he'll land me there before his term of office is out." And Mike gloomily departed.

With the aid of a locksmith he succeeded in entering his shop. That night a mason and a plumber arrived and built another elaborate "hide." A part of the brick wall between his building and the adjoining one was removed and a flat copper tank was built in with the old bricks, the new mortar being colored to resemble the old. A water pipe was attached to the top of the tank and to a wash bowl in an upper room, so that it could be filled whenever it should be necessary. Another pipe was attached to the bottom and led to a kitchen sink in the other building, where a com-

bination faucet, having the appearance of an ordinary water faucet was placed. When turned, only city water could be drawn from it, but by pressing a concealed spring and turning the faucet at the same time the whiskey from the tank would flow into the glass. As an after thought he placed a dish of disinfectant in the sink where it could be used instantly to deaden the smell of the whiskey. To make assurance doubly sure, he had electric push buttons placed at the farther corners of each building and watchers posted to ring when they should have any inkling of the approach of the sheriffs.

"Now let's see 'em get us!" he said to Tim. "I'm only going to keep the tank full of whiskey and leave the bottles and jugs at the express office. Even that devil sheriff can't interfere with them, 'cause the United States protects 'em in bringin' it in. I'll give 'em orders to let you have it and you can bring it up every day or two or three times a day. Even if Freeman or his deputies see you, they'll never find that tank."

"But they'll catch me for illegal transportation," whimpered Tim, who had conceived a wholesome fear of the Prohibition sheriff.

"But we've got to fight this feller, Tim," he continued. "The Whiskey Trust fellers and wholesale men in other states that I've bin buyin' from has promised that they'll back me with any amount of money if I will keep right on with me business and show that a Prohibition sheriff can't enforce the law. They say fur me to give it away if I can't sell it. They calculate that with the help of the mare and perlice we can show up more drunks than before, even if there aint so many. That'll sicken the people uv Prohibition and they'll elect the Democrats next time; and then we

can do business out in the open and make money. You'll have good job, Tim, and stand behind a marble bar with a white coat on right on Main street where all the pretty girls can see you, instead of hidin' in a dark shop and watchin' for trouble as we've bin doin', even when our frien's was runnin' things."

CHAPTER XI

A MOB was gathered in front of Mike's Place completely filling the street, and it could be easily seen that it was in an ugly mood.

Several times the sheriff's deputies had descended upon Mike's Place, but the watchers had pressed the buttons, the buzzers had rung and Mike had had sufficient warning to flush the sink with water in which the disinfectant had been used to deaden the smell of the whiskey; and all the efforts of the deputies had failed in locating the place from which the whiskey came.

But the sheriff was very sure that Mike was still selling liquor, though only at liberty on bail until the next session of the superior court. But the best efforts of Starling and Hermon had failed to locate the "hide."

Laurence had passed by Mike's Place several times during the day, but each time the watchers were prepared and the bells rang loud and long, so that when he entered there was no sign of illicit traffic. When he had passed on for apparently the last time, a few customers were hastily served. But the watchers were so intent in watching for the sheriff or his deputies that they scarcely noticed the approach of two strangers, until a hand was laid heavily on the shoulder of each and they were ordered to march to the police station.

Laurence had called in two of his deputies from one of the country towns, who were unknown by sight to the watchers. He had acted as a decoy himself, while the deputies had strolled carelessly along from opposite directions and

arrested the watchers as vagrants — “loitering about the streets without visible means of support.”

Of course the bells had not rung, and at this psychological moment Laurence had slipped into the building and discovered that the sink was smelling of whiskey. In a few minutes he had discovered, by the fresh appearance of the mortar despite the coloring, that the bricks had been removed from the wall and afterwards replaced.

The mob had gathered quickly on seeing the watchers taken away by the two deputies and were now waiting for the appearance of Laurence, vowing that he should never get away with “that good stuff.”

Two policemen, whose duty it was to clear the streets, walked by as closely as possible to the walls of the building, evidently not daring to ask the men, women and boys composing the mob to move on.

By a vigorous use of his jimmy, Laurence soon loosened the bricks and removed the tank. It held several gallons of liquor and he was obliged to place it on his shoulders and hold it with both hands.

As soon as he appeared in the doorway he was greeted with a storm of jeers and insults. One of the hoodlums attempted to grab the tank from his shoulders, but a vigorous kick disposed of him. Then a large stone, thrown from a second story window, struck the tank and nearly knocked it from his shoulders; but Laurence walked determinedly on, hoping each moment for the return of his allies, the two country deputies. He had left the mob a little behind him, probably it was so planned by them, and was congratulating himself that he would soon be out of danger, when another stone, hurled with all the strength of Mike McBlinche's arm, struck him on the temple and he fell dazed and bleeding to

the pavement. The mob rushed towards him, a hundred hands outstretched to recover the tank of whiskey. But Mike McBlinche was the nearest. Raging like a bull, he rushed to the side of the fallen man, caught the jimmy from his belt, and kneeling on his breast swung the heavy iron instrument above his head. With the hate and venom and brute strength behind it, a blow from the jimmy meant almost certain death. But the blow did not fall.

From a dark alley rushed a white shape and a sudden jerk caused Mike to lose his balance and fall sprawling in the street. The mob fell back in awe for a moment.

"Aw! it's nothin' but a woman," cried Tim from the midst of the crowd. "It's that Hazel Worthington wot's always complainin' to the sheriffs. Grab de tank and skidoo! De bloke's dead and we don't want to stay here long."

Two of the men stepped forward to take the tank, expecting no resistance from Hazel, but she had secured the jimmy by this time and stood on guard over her fallen lover. "Don't touch that," she cried, as one of the men stooped to raise it.

"Aw, who's afraid of you?" he asked and, as if realizing what would hurt her most, he raised his foot and aimed a kick at Laurence, who was now feebly attempting to raise himself. But he fell back with a howl of pain as the heavy jimmy came down upon his right arm with sufficient force to crack the bone.

"Grab the tank and skip!" howled Tim, "the whole bloomin' crowd of deputies is comin'!"

A team was rushing down the street. In it were Starling, Hermon and one of the country deputies. While the latter headed the horse into the midst of the mob, Starling and

Hermon leaped from the wagon and struck with their heavy jimmies every head that came in their way. A few moments of this vigorous charge demoralized the mob and they broke and ran. But not before Mike McBlinche and Tim had been caught and handcuffed.

"Sure me head is broke," wailed Tim, "an' now it's jail fur me, I feel it in me bones."

"Right y'are, Tim," growled McBlinche, "they've bruck every bone in me body an' it's good company you'll be havin' in jail. If ever I gets out uv this scrape I'll give it up an' go to some State where they aint got no prohibition law an' a man can sell rum decent."

Hazel stooped and lifted the bleeding head of her lover into her lap and tried to wipe away the crimson stain with her handkerchief. O, my love!" she cried, "I accused you of being obstinate in sticking to what you called principle, and you were right, right, right! and I was wrong. And now perhaps you have given your life for the sake of saving my poor brother and others like him. And I have been cruel and wicked to you, so cruel and unkind. Can you ever forgive me?"

"It's all right, Hazel, dear," murmured Laurence, as the faithful deputies lifted him into the wagon. When I am able to talk straight I will ask you a question that I asked you once before."

"I am not worthy of you, Laurence, after all my foolish pride and obstinacy; but if you love me after all that has passed, you need not ask the question for I am saying "yes" now."

"Without any conditions?"

"Without any conditions except that you will always love me and be patient with my faults."

"But how happened it that you came just in the nick of time to save my life?"

"It didn't happen, dear. I have been afraid for you ever since you were elected sheriff; and I came to this part of the city to-night because I wanted to know if you were safe or in trouble. And when I saw the mob I knew that they would try to kill you and so I hid in the alley, hoping that I could help you in some way."

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"What more do you need to make you completely happy, Sis?" asked Randolph Worthington as he stood beside his sister a year later just after the words had been said making her Laurence Freeman's wife.

"You know, Randolph."

"Yes, I know. But this new leg is a good one and I can get about very easily. And you know I haven't drank a drop since Laurence shut up the rumshops. By the way, Mike McBlinche sent for me yesterday and asked me to give you his best wishes. He said that he was glad Laurence had put him out of business and that when he gets out of jail he will go into some legitimate business and never sell another drop of liquor. But there is another piece of good news."

"What! more happiness for me?"

"Yes, Watson proved unsatisfactory as foreman and the boss learned that he tried to shield Mike from the penalties of rumselling so as to keep his place open and thus cause my discharge; and because I have not touched liquor for more than a year, he has given me my old job back."

"And Evelyn?" turning to glance into the face of her sister-in-law.

"I am with my husband, heart and soul," answered Evelyn softly.

Turning to Laurence, Hazel placed both hands on his shoulders and, looking deep into his eyes, whispered lovingly: "And all this happiness, and the happiness in many homes in this city to-day is because you stood by your principles and did your duty as you saw it in spite of the arguments of mistaken friends and the many temptations devised by the enemies of right. I am glad that you were willing to give me up rather than sacrifice the right and were able to withstand the temptation that I foolishly put in your way."

"It is all passed now, dear," he answered, "and we are much better and stronger for the chastenings through which we have passed. I have only done my duty; but I think I have proved that the prohibitory law can be enforced when the power is placed in the hands of a Prohibitionist; and if one man can accomplish even what I have, how much more could be accomplished if the Prohibition party should elect all the officers."

