

Nothing for it but a duel between Harry and Albert

## LOW-DOWNS ON THE HIGH-UPS

By THE GENTLEMAN AT THE KEYHOLE

ONE can imagine the salty tears that ran down the cheeks of Postmaster General Harry New when he heard that Senator Jim Watson was sore beset because Jim and his Governor Ed Jackson were suspected of having worshiped around the spotlighted Napoleon shrine of the former Indiana chief Kluxer Stephenson, now in jail. One can picture his grief-stricken countenance as he read how the promise had been given to make Jim President with a novel inauguration parade, white-robed and masked hosts marching down Pennsylvania Avenue and into the White House.

Harry New and Jim Watson were once colleagues in the Senate. Or, to go back a little farther than that, Harry New came into power in Indiana when a new and pure lot of Republicans like Will H. Hays and Jim Goodrich picked up the pieces that were left after an explosion of righteous indignation blew up the old Fairbanks-Hemingway machine and started to rebuild the Republican party.

Jim Watson, who had been errand runner for the Fairbanks-Hemingway crowd, was one of the pieces blown so high that for a long time he was not to be found.

Jim, however, found himself after a while, and by the time Harry New got to the Senate Jim came in alongside of him, to the great scandal of the righteous.

In 1920 Jim Watson was up for re-nomination and reelection. And by that time Albert Jeremiah Beveridge, thinking about his own Napoleonic destiny to be President, considered starting for the White House by once more becoming a senator.

A race in the provinces against Mr. Beveridge was the last thing Jim Watson wanted, so he begged Harry New to pull Beveridge off his back.

New's friends persuaded Beveridge. Jim, deeply grateful, assured Harry New that he had saved his political life. He could never do enough to repay his benefactor.

In 1922 it became New's turn to run for the Senate again, and there was no pulling Beveridge off this time. There

was nothing for it but a duel in the provinces between New and Beveridge.

By this time Jim Watson had become more nearly than Harry New the master of the Indiana machine, Mr. New being hardly more than

a junior partner in power. It was Jim Watson's time to pay the great debt.

The primary fight was hot. Beveridge was making Indiana ring with his voice. Harry New, wearing his great hat, talking in his rural way and looking for all the world like a stage country chairman, was making the plain people of Indiana feel that he was the good soul that he is.

But the verdict seemed likely to be for Albert, so an S O S was sent to Jim in Washington.

Word came back that all of Jim Watson's men would work their heads off for Harry, but that Jim himself could do more for Harry by staying away. When the vote was counted there was a singularly small vote for Harry New in all the Watson sections, and Destiny had made one step forward toward putting Beveridge in the White House. Albert was nominated for senator, and by a coincidence Harry was eliminated as junior partner in the management of Republican affairs in Indiana.



New bared his good soul to the plebs

But when the votes were counted after Election Day Albert Beveridge thought he saw, just as Harry New did after Primary Day, a marked deficiency of votes in the Jim Watson strongholds. So it is probably true, as reported, that he dropped several tears upon the manuscript of the Life of Lincoln he is writing and remarked in his evangelical way something about "his sins finding him out."

No reporter has learned whether Jim Watson sent S O S's to Harry New and Albert Beveridge this year.

Anyway, Harry New stayed in Washington sorting out the mail. His hat is as big as ever, his voice as rural as if he were still persuading a hundred thousand farmers to vote for him, an Indianapolis editor and the son of one. He cares more for hunting and fishing than he does for politics. And he is the best-liked man in the Cabinet.

## "Done Got Over"

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and back—twenty-four miles. He had had to ride slowly, because the old mule tired easily and had gone a little lame. He would have made the trip by stage, but no stage went in the afternoon. Both towns were off the railroad.

He had gone to Miss Sadie Lee's house, and again Miss Jinny had been away. Miss Sadie had taken her motor-ing. The best he had been able to accomplish was to leave a note, to be delivered to Miss Jinny immediately upon her return. He hadn't dared wait for her. If she wasn't going to stop Zach Draper, he had to do it himself.

He couldn't sleep. His mind ran all night, as uselessly as the arms of an unconnected windmill. It showed him scores of unrelated pictures: the faces of boys he knew off at school; the little white New England church in the village there; Draper, laughing at him; a bend in the creek where he used to swim; his father's body; the corner of a cornfield behind a snake fence covered with purple morning glories. It repeated scraps of the day's conversations. On and on and on. It reverberated soundlessly with the voodooistic terror that ran through the Negroes of the Piney Woods at the prospect of the morrow's sensation. Fear, like a hot wind, blew across it, searing and drying his thoughts. He felt things older and bigger and more terrible than he had realized thrashing around him in the hot, humid Southern air. . . .

Finally he got up and rummaged in a cupboard and slipped his father's old pistol into the pocket of his coat where it hung over the back of a chair. He had a plan now. It was as simple as Cain's. . . .

Toward morning he slept a little.

WOODIE sat on the front pew in the Old Ship of Zion, between his mother and Maria Knox. His mother was heavily swathed in borrowed black. Her plump, innocent features, still swollen from weeping, looked purged and peaceful beneath her veil. She alone was unaware of the air of tense expectancy that bound the rest of the congregation together.

In front of them stood his father's coffin, on two sawhorses, banked deep with cape jasmine, which had just begun to bloom: dead-white half-opened flowers set stiffly in stiff, glistening green leaves. Their heavy odor lay like a blanket over the place in spite of the open windows. A score of spring scents outside strove against it in vain.

Behind him the church filled steadily. He could feel the waiting people: row on close-packed row, all their faces turned one way—tense—expectant—frightened. They were all very still. Somewhere in the distance a man was calling hogs. The long-drawn notes of his voice sounded like a horn. It died away, and the kind of silence that belongs only to funerals fell upon the little church. Into it the clock on the wall plumped nine twangy notes.

Charity spread her thin, black fingers over the keys of the melodeon. Draper erected his bulk in the chancel and began lining out the first hymn: "Shall We Gather at the River?"

Woodie's hour was on him, and Miss Jinny hadn't come.

Things swam together and went black. He clutched the butt of the pistol in his coat pocket with a cold, damp hand and stared at Draper. The man seemed of superhuman size. He was like something the little church had been built to hold. Woodie shook with fear.

His mother laid her hand on his arm. "Is yer all right, son?"

"Yes'm," he muttered thickly, "I'm all right." But he scarcely heard her and was barely aware that he had replied.

The first notes of the hymn came whining out of the old melodeon. He rose with the rest, and the congregation sang. It passed over his mind in a blur of sound.

Draper knelt beside the pulpit and prayed, and the people bowed their heads to the roll of his voice. Woodie listened long enough to be sure the prayer held no menace for the dead man; the rest of it became a confused rumble in his ears.

Draper rose from his knees. Omitting the hymn between the prayer and the sermon, he looked out over his people—gathered them in with his eye. A hush fell upon them. The faint, lazy call of a distant flycatcher pulsed its way clearly through their midst, and he spoke, slowly.

"Brethren an' sisters, de hymn done ax yer, shall we gather at de river, de beautiful river dat flows by de throne uv Gawd? An' Ah'm a-axin' yer"—he paused, spread out his arms in a slow gesture of restrained power and let his voice fall upon a note that went through the waiting people as a wind through leaves—"Ah'm a-axin' yer, brethren an' sisters, when yer gits ter de river, de beautiful river dat flows by de throne uv Gawd, is yer gwine ter be fitten ter git on de boat: de big boat dat's awaitin' by de bank, wid de steam a-shootin' outer de chimbley an' de paddles a-splashin' in de water—de big boat dat's a-writin' dar ter take yer on down ter de throne itse'f? Is yer gwine ter be fitten?"

A groan went over the people. A scarcely audible sigh of anticipation came out of them. Draper caught it and fanned it. His voice began its steady march toward its goal. Woodie's mouth grew dry. His heart seemed about to burst.

"It ain't gwine do yer no good ter sneak on ter de big boat ef yer ain't fitten, 'cause yer can't fool de Lawd Jesus! Yer might fool de cap'n er de boat, or de Angel Gabriel, but"—the creak of an automobile brake came through the window—"yer can't"—his outstretched hand sank to his side—"fool!"

His big features stiffened with displeasure. He stood silent, staring toward the door.

Woodie turned with the rest. His heart bounded like a toy balloon and then crowded up into his throat and stuck there.

Miss Jinny Pickens was coming down the aisle.

But not the Miss Jinny Pickens he remembered: a frail, little old woman with bent back and brown time spots on her wrinkled cheeks, who wore shabby clothes and walked slowly, leaning on a cane.

A swift sense came back to him of the Miss Jinny whose foot had tapped the floor as positively as a woodpecker's beak against a tree; whose back had been as straight as a child's; whose movements had been marked with crisp decisiveness; whose clothes had been magnificent.

OR HAD they only seemed so to the ragged little boy who had never owned a pair of shoes or seen a train? Was it possible that she had been old and frail and shabby then?

He couldn't tell; but then and always she had been Miss Jinny Pickens, and a member of the super-supreme court which in the last analysis settled everything of importance in that countryside. No Negro in the state had ever openly crossed one of them and lived out the day. He looked with swift hope at Draper—and saw that things had changed.

Something inhered in Miss Jinny that stood for power, but Draper didn't see it. He waited there in haughty, calculating silence, watching her progress down the aisle through contemptuous, half-closed eyes, unimpressed and unafraid. The consciousness that the issue lay solely between him and Draper grew tight about Woodie's heart. Miss Jinny faded out for him almost before she had settled herself in the chair that someone brought from the little room behind the melodeon.

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## 40 Minutes of Music —on a Single Record

OUT of the wonder-working laboratory of Thomas A. Edison, creator of the phonograph, has come another revolutionizing invention, an instrument and a record that render 40 MINUTES OF RE-CREATED MUSIC ON ONE DOUBLE-FACED RECORD. These new records are no larger size than short-playing records. Long selections — symphonies, operas, dinner music, and complete recital programs — that formerly required an *album* of records, may now be contained complete on a single Edison Record.

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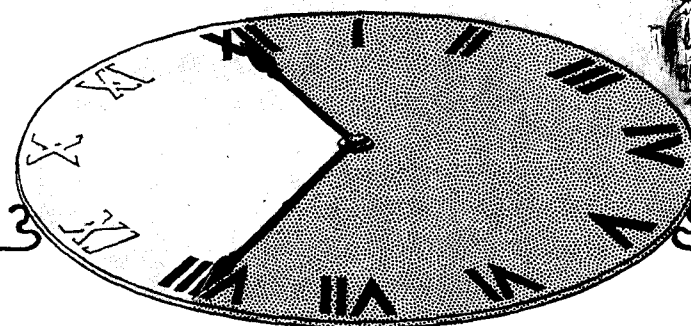
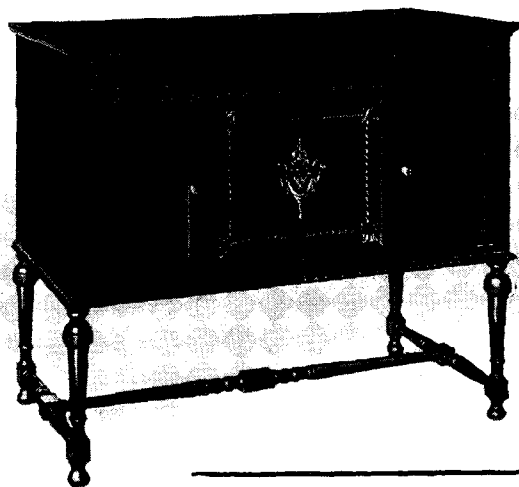
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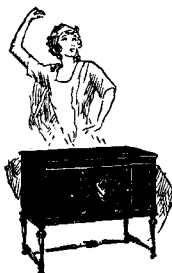
This Long-Playing Phonograph costs no more than ordinary, short-playing phonographs.



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"It is hard indeed," remarks H. L. Mencken, "to recall a class of Americans to whom the late war was unpleasant." It is apparent from this that Mr. Mencken is not a parent.

H. G. Wells says the main character in his new book doesn't mean himself. Flattery!

The ideal motto for European countries seems to be WE'RE DICTATED TO BUT NOT RED.

As for flying, you can't always keep a good man up.

After all, the best football is only the best head ball.

London Punch accepts no more liquor ads. That is, it still cheers but no longer inebriates.

Some men never get over being in love with the woman they think they are in love with.

The latest novelty in cribs has an adjustable attached cigarette ash tray.

The London Times says no American can write. But at least we know how to underwrite.

A hero is a man who once forgot that he was a coward.

Now is the time to put off getting up the original Christmas card greeting which you won't send this year.

Our beauty shows have not made much advance over our dog shows. We still prefer to judge the entries by points rather than dispositions.

Every road hog seems to be entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of all other drivers who are not road hogs.

In too many cases a college sophomore is one who has survived the bad booze of the freshman and junior.

Mexico seems to feel that so far as we are concerned she can enjoy all the privileges we give to our gunmen.

The self-kidder has this advantage—in the end he gets his own angora.

# "DONE GOT OVER"

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And Draper too, as soon as he began to talk again, forgot her. His voice took on the sound of something started on its way which could not be stopped—not even by the preacher himself. There had been but one rebellion in the Old Ship of Zion since he came: now was the time to stamp out any last lingering embers of it. As he slowly raised his hand and swung back into his march of words, Woodie's vitals seemed to melt and flow downward. Despair boiled in him like vomit.

"De Lawd Jesus'll be a-waitin'! He'll be a-settin' on de edge er de great white throne, a-waitin'—a-waitin' fer dat boat! An' when He see it comin', He'll holler out ter de angels: 'H'ist up de silver spyglass ter Mah eye!' An' de angels'll h'ist it. Twelve angels it'll take ter h'ist up de silver spyglass ter His eye."

"An' den He'll p'int de silver spyglass, an' ef dere's anybody on dat boat dat don't belong—He'll see um! He'll see spang through um!"

"An' He'll say: 'Lean de silver spyglass erginst de throne, an' lif' up de speakin' trumpet dat's made er gol!' An' de angels'll do it. Twenty angels it'll take ter lif' up de speakin' trumpet dat's made er gol!'"

"An' den de Lawd Jesus'll put His mouth ter de speakin' trumpet, an' He'll holler out loud an' cl'are: 'Mistah Cap'n, yer hyeh Me?' very slowly and solemnly: 'Yer got er onbelieve on dat boat! Yer'll have ter stop an' go back, Mistah Cap'n, an' lan' um—'"

Woodie's hand closed round the pistol, when his eye chanced to fall on Miss Jinny's face. Her look of quiet certitude startled him. He leaned forward, scarcely breathing.

"—an' lan' um whar he belongs!"

Miss Jinny cleared her throat, but Draper didn't notice.

"Back whar de brimstone's at, an' de fire—"

Miss Jinny moved her chair, but Draper didn't even look her way.

"Back whar de smoke's a-curlin' out de groun', an'—"

The sharp pounding of Miss Jinny's cane fell across his sentence and broke it as brittle off as if it had been a rod of glass.

WOODIE dropped back limply into his seat. He opened his mouth to still the sound of his breathing. He grew weak under the surge of his relief. For a moment all that he could realize was that he hadn't had to shoot—that Miss Jinny had saved him from that.

She sat on the edge of her chair, as delicately separate as a white hepatica, looking straight at Draper, and as the sense of her sank into Woodie it seemed to him that she was a part of the backbone of life itself, and again he looked at the preacher with a flaming up of hope.

But the big Negro was staring at the white woman in blank amazement, without meeting her eyes, much as he might have stared at the roof if it had fallen in; uneasy only because the mood he had induced in his people had been threatened.

For a moment he was silent, while he reassembled his scattered powers. He shifted his weight until the floor creaked. He leaned forward and began to speak again, and Woodie's hope sank slowly and heavily. It was going to take more than the pounding of a cane to stop Zachariah Draper.

With his hand on his father's old pistol, that had never been pointed at anything bigger than a chicken-hunting skunk, he leaned forward breathlessly, while Draper, out of a deep instinct in such matters, and as though rebuking his antagonist, laid his tongue to stronger words than any of his own.

"De Good Book say"—with somber emphasis—"Take heed lest dere be in any uv yer an evil heart uv onbelief! Take heed, fer de sword uv Gawd am quick an' powerful, an' sharper dan

any two-edged sword, piercin' even ter de dividin' asunder uv de soul an' de sperret, an' uv de j'int's an' de marrow!"

"Amen!" a woman said startlingly in a clear soprano; the others groaned in chorus, "Amen! A-men, brudder!" and the shattered mood of the people came together again.

Draper fanned it as a wind fans a prairie fire: "Brethren an' sisters, ef yer want ter lan' at de great white throne, yer got ter git shed uv dat evil heart uv onbelief!"

Tap, tap, went the cane, mild and premonitory, but he pretended not to hear.

"De Good Book say: 'He shall set de sheep on His right han', but de goats on de lef'. An' He shall say under dem on de lef' han', Depart from me, ye cursed, inter everlastin' fire, prepared fer de Devil an' his angels!'"

A gleam came into his eye. He in his pulpit, in the midst of his people, and the white woman down there alone. . . ! Almost alone too, now in that part of the state: ten Negroes all about her now to every poverty-stricken white. . . ! He within his rights, and she a trespasser. . . ! His voice rolled out over her like a river:

"Yer got ter pull off from de goats! Yer got ter come inter de fold!"

HE CHANTED like a warrior leading hosts, with a rhythm as heavily marked as the beating of a drum.

"Ah been down yander in de cane-brake, a-lookin' fer dem goats—a-studyin' in mah min' an' a-wrastlin' in mah soul! Ah been down yander in de canebrake, an' what yer think Ah see?"

A moan of anticipation—pleasure and horror and fear—ran over his human harp strings. "What yer see, brudder?" "Glory, hallelujah!" "Praise de name er Jesus!" "What yer see?"

"Ah done see de Devil, de big, black, shiny Devil, a-scorchin' up de canebrake wid his breath!"

A bass voice began to moan heavily. An alto joined. Others took it up, improvising with a sure sense of harmony an elaborate background for Draper's trampling barytone.

"His tail was long an' shiny lak' er blacksnake! His eyes was lak' de haid-lights on de train!"

Woodie shut his eyes and prayed. The long-continued pound of emotion had beaten from him all acquired white folks' methods of speech and feeling. "Gawd gimme strength," he prayed, "ter shoot um through de heart ef Ah have ter!"

The trampling barytone went on: "His feet was p'inted lak' er crowbar an' cloven in de midst, an' his mouth was lak' er watermillon full er seeds!"

Woodie sat there stiff and cold with sweat, in his excitement almost as white as a white boy. He looked childlike and harmless and pitiful, but he was the most dangerous kind of potential murderer: the determined coward, rapt out of himself past the reach of reason; ready to shoot when Draper's words should pull the trigger.

Draper's words crept toward it steadily. "His long white teeth was a-champin' an' a-scrunchin' an' a-gnashin'—fer dem goats!"

He got his people rocking and moaning to the drunken rhythm of his feelings and his words. He got them ten thousand miles away from the mind of the white woman, so that her lonely, pale face in their midst seemed strange and unnatural. And suddenly, under cover of the eerie din, he dropped like a waiting eagle straight for his prey: "An' de Devil say ter me: 'Whar's dat backslider?'"

Tap, tap, tap, insisted the cane, steady and sharp.

Woodie moved farther from his mother, for elbow room.

Tiny beads of sweat broke out on Draper's face, but he didn't swerve. "Whar's de man dat laid his 'ligion down?"

"Gawd gimme strength!" Woodie prayed.

"He ain't so dark,' de Devil say, 'an' he ain't so light.'"

Woodie cocked the old pistol in his pocket.

"He's middle-sized,' de Devil say, 'an' he's got er limp—'"

Woodie leaned forward to shoot, but Miss Jinny was on her feet.

She had risen casually, as if to smooth the folds of the shawl that lay over the back of her chair, but the straight thrust of her keen blue eyes seeking the preacher's made the air between them crackle with life.

Draper drew himself up to the full of his enormous height. He was as superb and as sincere as a great coiled snake. He thrust out his jaw and frowned; his eyes lightened in the way they had, and the essential spirit within him met Miss Jinny's steadily.

The whole church held its breath. There was a moment of intense silence, through which the call of the flycatcher fanned its lazy way, and then an inward and spiritual something behind the frail old countenance broke something behind the big, glistening black face, with its prow of a nose, its curling lips and heavy jowl and restless, predatory eyes—broke it with a snap that might have been audible, so definite it was.

Draper raised his hand and lowered it; opened his mouth and closed it again; drew forth the polka-dotted handkerchief and mopped the perspiration from his face.

And then Miss Jinny sat down, and he found that he could speak.

But whatever it was that had snapped in him had snapped too in his people. An uneasy sense of shame lay over them. There wasn't one who didn't know Tampa Simmons as he knew his own hearthstone; not one whom the dead man hadn't helped and comforted when he could; who didn't believe in him as no human being had ever believed in Draper. The tide of feeling flowed away from the preacher; ebbed faster and faster with his every word.

He couldn't tell what was stopping him. He was like a bird trying to fly through the pane of a window. Because he could not see it, he thought there was nothing there, and battered himself to pieces against the realest thing in all that country, going down at last before his congregation, a beaten man, jabbering meaningless sentences out of which one fact only stood up: that the soul of Tampa Simmons went to heaven, where Miss Jinny Pickens wanted it to go.

And in the midst of the debacle a strange thing happened. Softly, spontaneously, without a leader, the people began to sing. "Done got over!" they sang:

*Done got over!  
Had a hard time;  
Had to work so long;  
But I done got over,  
Done got over,  
Done got over at last!*

The deep, old, patient, humble melody fell upon them like the spirit of Christ, and they bowed their heads and sank to their knees, and most of them wept.

AND that night Woodrow Woodson Simmons, the son of Tampa Bay Florida Simmons, who was the son of Wisdom, a chattel without surname belonging to the Pickens estate; who was the son of Zebulon, likewise a slave; who was the son of a naked savage of the Congo jungle, walked alone through his native woods like a murderer reprieved, with a heart too big for his breast; and, throwing the old pistol far out into the swamp, caught the sound of the myriad feet of his people stumbling painfully along the way his father had traveled, out of the land of ignorance and out of the house of fear, and swore that some spark of his father's spirit should march in him at the head of that army until he died.