



WORK AND WIN

AN INTERESTING WEEKLY FOR YOUNG AMERICA.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

No. 16.

NEW YORK, MARCH 24, 1899.

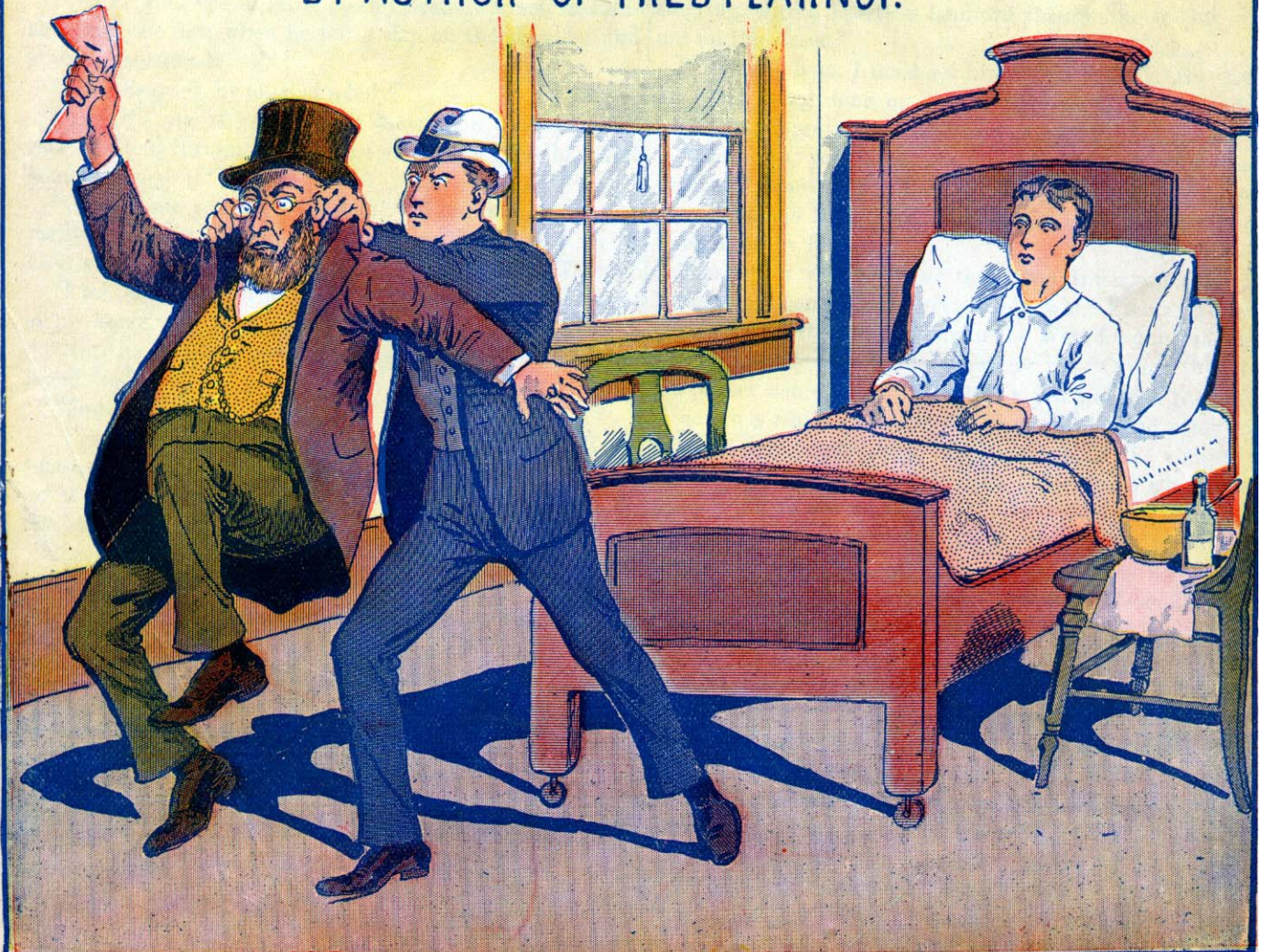
Price 5 Cents.

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OR

HELPING A FRIEND IN NEED.

BY AUTHOR OF "FRED FEARNOT."



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FRED FEARNOT'S GOOD WORK;

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CHAPTER I.

FRED FEARNOT MEETS A FRIEND ON THE STREET AND LEARNS OF ANOTHER SICK AND HUNGRY.

Fred Fearnot was walking down Chestnut street, in Philadelphia, one day, when he felt a slap on the shoulder and a voice exclaimed:

"Fred Fearnot, by all that's holy!"

"Yes, it's me, if you haven't knocked a shoulder off," replied Fred, turning to face the stranger. "Hello, Sam! Glad to see you!"

"Glad to see you, too, old man! Have thought of you many a time. Haven't seen you since we broke up at Louisville. What are you doing here, and where is Terry?"

"I am here on a little business. Terry is up the State at his home. Is your company here?"

"No; the company never got together again after Hammond died."

"Thunder! Did he die?"

"Yes, and his widow is living in New York. That smash-up out in Kansas was too much for him."

"Well, I'm sorry to hear that. What has become of all the boys and girls of his company?"

"Scattered to the four corners of the earth. Some are still on the boards, some retired to little hall rooms to meditate on the uncertainty of mundane affairs, and still others, myself among them, living on hope and charity."

"Well, that's a sad story, Sam."

"Yes; we never had any more luck after you left us. But Gussie Silvers is up high with Goodrich's Company in Chicago, getting a hundred dollars a week."

"By George, but I'm glad to hear that! I knew she had the genius for better things than Hammond gave her."

"Yes. She says she owes her rise in the profession to you."

"Where's Nellie Traynor?"

"She is Mrs. Gale now, and she and Gale are having a hard time of it barnstorming somewhere out West. You remember Phil Grimes?"

"Yes; he played the scout in 'The Spy.' Where is he?"

"Up in a little hall room over on Race street, sick and starving, with a heartless landlord threatening to put him out on the street."

"See here, Sam, I must see him," said Fred. "He saved me from being done up one evening in St. Louis, and I have never forgotten it. Can you go with me to his room?"

"Bless you, yes. I've nothing in the world to do and plenty of time to do it in. Come on," and the fellow turned on his heels and went up the cross street toward Race, Fred by his side.

The fellow was no other than Sam Innes, an actor in Hammond's company the year before, when Fred and Terry Olcott joined them for a tour in the West for the fun that was in it. He was better known as the "Cynic" than by his proper name. He was out of a job and in a bad way, although a really good actor. Fred and he had often exchanged left-handed compliments when in the company, but were good friends for all that. The youth whom they were going to see an orphan about Fred's age, who had a hard time of it in the company, owing to his lack of experience before the footlights. Fred was his best friend on the tour, and had several times saved him from dismissal by the manager on account of Gale's dislike of him. Gale was the leading man, a very conceited fellow who had a very extensive idea of his histrionic abilities, and once made the mistake of running up against Fred in a rather rough way. But when Fred thrashed him he behaved better to every one in the company.

"How long have you been thusly, Sam?" Fred asked his companion as they walked up the street.

"About three months," returned Sam.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Hauged if I know. I do my work well, as you know,

two 'snaps' that I joined went to pieces after one week, and we had to count the cross ties back to the city. What little money I had I gave to Elsie Warner to pay her fare back to New York. The poor girl was crying so, saying it would kill her to count cross ties, because she wasn't good at counting at all. I hear she is playing there now at thirty-five dollars a week, but appears to have forgotten that I am still on my uppers."

"Does she know where you are?"

"Yes. When I heard where she was playing I wrote and congratulated her on her good fortune, and asked her to see what chance I would have if I hoofed it over there, but she never answered the letter."

"I am surprised at that," remarked Fred, "for I thought she was a different girl from that."

"Oh, it's the way with the majority of people—when a fellow is down he has no friends."

"You are still a cynic, I see," laughed Fred.

"Oh, I don't know; one has to be a philosopher in order to take things as they come, and the Lord knows I've been tempted sometimes to take things that didn't come."

"What! Is it so bad as that with you, Sam?"

"Yes, and worse. If it was dead winter I could keep up on eating snow balls; as it is, I am living on the balmy air of summer, and that, you know, isn't very strengthening."

"Say, Sam, are you utterly dead broke?"

"Dead broke is no name for it, Fearnot. I haven't earned a penny in more than two months, and but for a friend, who is almost as bad off as myself, I would have been compelled to apply for quarters in the poorhouse."

Fred drew a five-dollar bill from his pocket and passed it to him. He took it, looked at it till his eyes moistened so he could scarcely see it.

"Don't say a word, Sam. How far is it up to Phil's room?"

"In the next block," was the reply.

"Well, let's go and see him, and then we'll talk over matters."

Passing on to the next block, they entered a large lodging house, and were met at the door by the janitor, who asked:

"Who do you want to see?"

"I wish to see Grimes," said Fred.

"Two flights up," said the janitor, "room No. 12."

"I know the room," said Sam, leading the way up stairs with Fred close behind him. On reaching No. 12 Sam pushed open the door and led the way in, asking as he entered:

"How are you now, Phil?"

"Sick and hungry," replied the youth, as he lay on his bed.

"What's the matter with you, Phil?" Fred asked, rushing to the bedside and grasping the young fellow's hand.

"I was hurt on the street cars, Fred, and a fever set in. I've been down three weeks now. I could soon get out if I could get food and medicine."

"Well, now, what's that got to do with it when I am 'round, I'd like to know? Just say what you want and, presto, it comes," and he drew a wad of money from his pocket as he spoke.

The sick boy's eyes opened wide and then filled with tears.

"Say, Sam; go out to a restaurant, fill your own empty grip, and then bring something for Phil," and he handed a bill to Innes, who turned to Phil and asked:

"What will you have, Phil?"

"Toast, tea and a soft-boiled egg," said Phil, and the next moment Sam was gone.

"Now, don't worry, Phil," said Fred. "We'll get you on your feet in a few days. I met Sam on Chestnut street and learned from him where you were. Have you had a doctor?"

"Yes, I did have, but he hasn't been in to see me in two days. I haven't been able to get his prescription filled, so I guess he doesn't care to see me any more."

"What's his name and where does he live?"

"Dr. Forbes, and his office is in the middle of this block on the next street north of this."

"Well, I'll see him and have him attend to you all right."

"Fred," faltered Phil, "I—I may never be able to repay you for this."

"Never mind about that, my boy. I haven't forgotten that night in St. Louis last summer. One good turn deserves another. I'll see that you get out of this all right. Just tell me what you need and I'll see that you get it."

"The doctor can tell you better than I what I need in the way of food and medicine. I owe the landlord three weeks' rent, six dollars, and he comes in every day and throws me into a high fever by threatening to throw me out on the street."

"What! Threatens to throw a sick man out on the street?"

"Yes; he is the meanest man I ever ran up against."

"Well, I'd like to hear him make a threat of that kind," said Fred, his eyes blazing with indignation. "I'd throw him out quicker than a keg of powder could."

"He is a big, burly fellow, with glasses, full beard and good clothes—one of those fellows who thinks a tenant ought to get down on his knees when he pays his rent."

"Well, if he comes in while I am here, leave him to me. I'm able to pay your rent for a year; but if he acts like a brute I'll teach him a lesson he won't forget for years to come."

"Don't have any trouble with him, Fred, as he can have me put out if the rent is not paid."

"He can't put a sick man out if the doctor says it would be dangerous to do so. I'll see the doctor after Sam comes back."

A little later Sam returned with tea, toast and two soft-boiled eggs, which he brought in a little paper box. Fred sat on the side of the bed and saw him eat it; and when Phil had finished, he told Sam to go for the doctor at once.

"Tell him that Phil has a friend here who will pay him for his services," he added.

"All right," said Sam, leaving the room with the physician's address.

He had scarcely been gone five minutes ere the door opened and a stout, elderly man, with a full beard and wearing glasses, entered. He looked at Fred with a pair of cold gray eyes, and asked:

"Who are you?"

"My name is Fearnot; who are you?" Fred answered.

"What are you doing here?"

"Looking after a sick friend; what are you doing here?"

"I'm here for my rent, which your sick friend doesn't seem to want to pay," and he looked over a number of rent receipts which he held in his right hand. When he found the bill against Phil he looked over his glasses at the youth on the bed and asked:

"How about this?"

"I can't pay it to-day, sir," replied Phil.

"That's what you've been saying every day. I've seen chaps like you before; regular dead beats, and——"

"Don't you know that he has been, and is yet, very ill, sir?" said Fred. "He has spent his money for medicines and doctor's bills."

"He hasn't paid the doctor a cent. He told me so. I am not running an open lodging house, and dead beats like him have to get out."

"Would you put a sick boy out on the street for the paltry sum of six dollars?"

"He is nothing to me. Let him sponge on his friends. If you are a friend of his, why don't you pay his rent and——"

"I am fully able to do so," said Fred, "and am going to see him through. I know him to be a square, honest boy who has run up against a streak of hard luck, and——"

"How about my hard luck in not getting my rent? It's a 'poor luck, isn't it?"

"Yes; but worse on him, in that he is ill and subject to daily visits from a man like you."

"Let him pay his rent and he'll get no visits from me. Dead beats like him are used to such things, and——"

"See here, sir!" and Fred turned on him with a cold glitter in his eyes. "Call him a dead beat again and I'll make you swallow it!"

"Eh! What!" he gasped. "This to me! Get out of here!" and with that he turned to Phil as he lay propped up on the bed, and poured a flood of abuse and wrath upon him, demanding his rent on pain of eviction.

Indignant at the man's insulting persistence and threatening language to his sick friend, Fred sprang up, seized him by the back of his neck and rushed him out of the room on a run.

Out in the corridor the irate landlord tried to get loose from Fred's grasp on the collar of his coat, and finding himself unable to do so, hissed out:

"Let go, you young whelp!" and kicked backward with all his might. Fred returned his kicks with a vigor that nearly raised him off his feet each time.

"Here! Here! That'll do!" he sang out.

"Very well, then," returned Fred. "I know how to deal with hogs like you. You are not only a hog in human shape, but a third-rate old scoundrel. Look at this!" and he drew a roll of ten-dollar bills from his pocket and added:

"I can match your bank account any day in the year, and thrash you three times a day in the bargain. I intended to pay his rent for him, but as you treated him like a brute I won't do it till he is able to be moved. If you put

him out against the protest of his doctor, you make yourself liable——"

"Pay his rent now," said the landlord, who would let anybody kick him for a dollar.

"Not on your life! Learn to be a gentleman, and you'll get it."

"I'll see you again," and the man ran down stairs, while Fred returned to the room which he had just left.

"What did you do to him, Fred?" Phil asked.

"I gave him a few kicks and told him I'd pay the rent if he'd learn to behave himself like a gentleman, and not before, and he said he would see me later."

"Oh, he'll put me out."

"Well, we'll see about that. He can't do it if the doctor says that it would be dangerous to you."

"Oh, the doctor is a friend of his, for he told him that I hadn't paid him anything, and that's why he hasn't been back here for two days past."

"Well, we'll wait and see what he says about it, anyway."

A few minutes later the door opened and the doctor came in, accompanied by Sam Innes.

"Ah! There's the doctor," said Phil.

"How are you now, my boy?" the doctor asked cheerily.

"I am feeling better since I got something to eat to-day," answered Phil, and then he introduced him to Fred, saying the latter was the friend who had kindly provided food for him and would see that his bill was paid.

"Such friends are blessings," remarked the doctor.

"So they are," assented Phil.

Fred drew his roll of bills from his pocket, handed the doctor \$10, saying:

"Get him on his feet as quick as you can, doctor, and you can get some more stuff like that."

"All right. He would get well all the quicker if he had better quarters. A little room like this is no place for a sick man."

"Can he be moved, doctor?"

"Yes, if he doesn't have to go too far. There are good rooms across the street from here, larger and airy, but a little more expensive."

"Hang the expense," returned Fred. "I've just fired out the old hog who plays landlord for this building for insulting Phil, and I want him moved if he can stand it. What he owes to his present landlord I'll never pay, and if Phil ever pays it and I find it out I'll thrash him."

"Don't forget that a landlord is entitled to his rent," suggested the doctor.

"Very true, but when a landlord stands up and looks a tenant in the face as he lies sick in his bed, heaping abuse upon him, calls him a dead beat and all that sort of thing, he signs a receipt for the rent in full."

"Did he do that?" the doctor asked.

"He did, in my presence, and I took him by the back of the neck and fired him out."

"I'm surprised at that," remarked the doctor. "He weighs a hundred pounds more than you do."

"Very true, but it's hog weight, which doesn't count against a man."

At that moment the door opened and the landlord returned with his janitor.

"Ah, you here, doctor?" the landlord said to the physician.

"Yes," replied the doctor, "and my bill has just been paid by his friend here."

"Well, mine isn't paid."

"Neither will it be paid," said Fred. "The doctor says that Grimes can be removed, and in less than one hour you can have the room."

"Well, so far as you are concerned, you'll go out now," said the janitor, taking hold of Fred's coat collar and giving him a violent jerk. The next moment Fred dealt him a blow in the face that sent him reeling against the wall on the opposite side of the room, and followed it up with two more, until he went down in a heap on the floor. Both the doctor and the landlord were utterly astounded at the tremendous fighting abilities displayed by him.

"Now, here's one for you, you old scoundrel!" said Fred, turning on the landlord, who made a bolt for the door, darted out and, in making his escape down the flight of stairs, lost his balance, fell and rolled to the bottom with a series of thumps and bumps that could be heard all over the house.

"Now, doctor," remarked Fred, "if you patch up any bruises for him make him pay for it."

CHAPTER II.

HOW FRED STOOD BY A SICK FRIEND—PHIL'S GRATITUDE AND SAM'S CYNICISM.

In order to get Phil out of the house as soon as possible and avoid further trouble, the doctor himself went across the street and secured a large, airy room, for which Fred paid a month in advance on the spot. When they returned across the street after Phil the landlord had a policeman there at the door, who told Fred that he couldn't enter the building without the landlord's permission.

"That's all right," laughed Fred. "The doctor will go up and see about his removal."

"Why don't you pay your rent?" the policeman asked.

"I don't owe him any rent," returned Fred. "It's a young friend of mine, who has been sick for three weeks, and owes the landlord six dollars. I intended to pay the rent for him, as I paid his doctor's bill, but when the landlord came in after his money he was so brutal and hoggish that I fired him out of the room and refused to pay. As a proof that I am able to pay, here's a receipt for a month's rent across the street at double what he was paying here."

"Has he no baggage?" the policeman asked, turning to the landlord.

"Not a thing," was the reply.

"Of course not," put in Fred; "his pocket is filled with pawn tickets; he had to spout everything he had for food and medicine. I know him to be a square, honest boy, who has run up against a streak of hard luck, just as the landlord did when he ran up against me."

By that time the doctor and Innes appeared at the door, bearing Phil between them, and conveyed him across the

street. As Fred turned to follow them, he looked at the landlord and remarked:

"Playing the hog has cost you just six dollars. If you want to have me arrested, do so, and I'll see that the entire city, through the public press, finds out just what sort of a hog you are."

"Go on, now," said the policeman. "You've no right to stand here and call people out of their names."

"I believe you are right, officer," laughed Fred. "You are the first policeman I ever met who knew anything about the law," and with that he turned and walked away, overtaking the doctor and Sam just as they were entering the house across the street.

"Ah, this is a room that is a room," remarked Phil, as he was led to the bed which the landlady had prepared for him.

"Yes," said the doctor; "I think you will soon be yourself again now, as you will not only have good quarters, but will not be annoyed any more," and with that he turned to the landlady and told her what he should have to eat, and she said she would see that he got it, whereupon the doctor left, saying that he would call again in the evening.

As soon as the doctor was gone the landlady, who was a lineal descendant of Mother Eve, asked Fred what the trouble was with the landlord over the way, and he told her the story of what had happened over there, when she remarked:

"There is nobody in the neighborhood but what hates him, and that janitor is the bully of the block."

"Lord bless you, madam, you should see him now. **He's** as gentle as a cooing dove, and if he was ever a bully **he's** forgotten all about it. I actually saw all the fight fly out of him when Fearnot hit him, just as the dust flies out of a brick when you throw it against a stone wall," said Sam.

"Well, he ought to have been punished by some one long ago," she remarked, "but I'm surprised that such a young man should be able to stand up against him."

"Oh, Fred could lick Samson, provided the old fellow didn't have that donkey's jawbone in his hand." The landlady looked at Fred with no little surprise, and asked him how he came to be so well able to fight big, strong men.

"Oh, I took lessons from teachers of the manly art so as to be able to take care of myself, and it pays to do it every time; and now, madam," he continued, "whatever my friend here calls for I want him to have it, and if you will tell me what the charge will be for a month's board I'll pay you for it now, so you won't have to lie awake of nights worrying about it."

"Oh, dear me," she replied, "I wouldn't think of worrying either myself or a boarder, and you needn't pay in advance unless you wish to, as you paid for the room for four weeks."

"Well, I wish to do so," returned Fred, and with that he paid her the amount she stated would be satisfactory, for which she gave a receipt. Fred then informed her that either himself or his friend Innes would call often to look after him. She said that was all right; they would always be welcome at the house, after which she left the room in possession of the three.

"Now, Phil, old man," said Fred, turning to his sick

friend, "make up your mind to get well as quick as you can. Your room and board is paid for for four weeks. If you can get up inside of a week you will have a home for three more weeks, during which time you can look about for an engagement. If you don't get one, and you are still rubbing up against hard luck, let me know about it. I never go back on a friend."

"Well, if I ever go back on you, Fred Fearnot," remarked Phil, his eyes filling with tears, "may the door of heaven be slammed against me, if I should ever get up to it."

"That's all right, old fellow. It's a hard world where a man can't find a friend-in it. Just think of that old fellow across the street. The only friend he has, probably, in the wide world is his pocketbook. He probably has but one love, and that is for the almighty dollar, and when he has to spend a quarter he does it with a groan, with remarks that he is in danger of fetching up at the poor-house. Such men have no soul larger than an atom, and St. Peter, himself, would have to put on magnifying glasses to see it if he should happen to try to pass in by him."

"How could such a soul get up so high?" Sam Innes asked.

"Because it's so small that the attraction of gravitation would have nothing to do with it."

"Well," laughed Sam, "you are figuring out that he will finally get away from Old Nick."

"I'm not figuring on it at all," returned Fred, "I don't believe he has any soul, hence he can never be happy in this life nor live again after he is dead."

"Well, that's a pity. He ought to live and roast through all eternity," returned Sam.

Fred spent a couple of hours by Phil's bedside, during which he twice administered doses of medicine which the doctor had ordered; told many amusing stories of his adventures since he saw him last, that cheered him up to such an extent that he declared he felt better than at any time since he was taken ill.

"Glad to hear it, old boy," said Fred. "I'll come around again in the evening and cheer you up still further if I can. What you most need just now is a good, quiet sleep, and if you get that you will be able to keep awake some to-night, when Sam and I will come back and sit up with you."

"All right. I believe I can sleep now, because my mind is free from worry," and with that Fred and Sam shook hands with him and left the house. As they passed the corner they saw the janitor across the way standing in the area in front of the house where Phil had been a lodger, with both eyes blackened and one side of his face much swollen. He had a big stick in his hand, which he shook threateningly at Fred, who called out to him:

"What's the matter with you?"

"Come over here and find out," was the reply. Fred laughed and passed on. Sam warned him that if he was not careful that janitor would waylay him with a club under cover of darkness.

"Ah, the streets are too well lighted for that," returned Fred.

"It's easy enough to turn off the light of a street lamp

and conceal oneself in a doorway somewhere. One whack of that club would settle you."

"Yes, if I held my head out for him to whack it; but I am not in the habit of doing so."

A little farther down the street Sam put his hands in his pockets and drew out the change of a five-dollar bill, which Fred handed to him by Phil's bedside when he sent him out to buy the tea and toast for him, saying:

"Here's the change for the bill you gave me to buy Phil's dinner for him."

"I guess you'd better keep that, Sam, for you seem to be up against a streak of hard luck yourself."

"You can bet I am; but if I ever get an engagement again I'll remember you, for you have helped me without my asking for it."

"Well, I am able to do so," returned Fred. "We had a good time together on that tour last summer, and I know enough of you to understand that it is hardly your fault that you are out of an engagement, unless it is your too great tendency toward cynicism."

"I wish I wasn't so much so," remarked Sam, "but hanged if I can help it. I've received so many hard thumps and bumps in knocking about the world I've become a cynic in spite of myself. I've almost lost faith in everything."

"That's natural, but it doesn't help you on in the world any, I fear."

"Perhaps it doesn't. I ought to stop it, but hardly know how. I am not a mean man, for I've shared my salary with many a poor fellow who was up against his luck, and only two of them ever remembered it afterward. It's enough to make one a cynic."

"So it is, so it is," assented Fred. "I haven't had experience enough in the profession to get on to that streak."

"Oh, it isn't confined to the profession at all. It's in every line of life."

"But you've run up with two who were honest and grateful, so don't condemn all the world by those who went back on you," said Fred.

"No, of course not," and, talking thus, the two wended their way down to Chestnut street again, where Fred made his way to the office of the man whom he had come to Philadelphia to see on business for his father. Innes went with him and waited outside until he had seen his man. When he returned he found Innes conversing with a well-dressed man of middle age.

"Say, Fearnot," said Sam, "this is Mr. Grohman, advance agent of the 'Fun Makers of Gotham' company, of New York," said Sam, introducing the two.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Grohman," said Fred, shaking hands with the man. "Going to make any fun here?"

"Well, I am trying to make arrangements for the company to do so. I am too melancholy myself to raise a smile on even an idiot."

"Idiots don't attend performances," remarked Fred. "They are generally a show themselves."

"Yes, so they are, but the woods are full of them. They attend whenever they can get free passes."

"Oh, that's the way you class 'em, is it?"

"Well, it's one of the divisions. There are still others."

"Have you found an opening here yet?" Fred asked, after a little more running talk.

"I have one place in view—the only one that fits in on time. Time is everything, you know, when a manager is paying salaries to a lot of people."

"Salaries? Is he paying salaries?"

"Yes, when he gets the scads."

"Well, I've got the funniest man in Philadelphia, and want to see that manager in his interest," remarked Fred.

"Who is he?" Grohman asked.

"Sam Innes; here he is," and Fred laid his hand on Sam's shoulder as he spoke.

"Oh, yes, he is full of fine humor, raises grim smiles and draws his salary like grim death; we all know him."

"Well, that's the only sort of humor that goes in Philadelphia. Put him on and see him tickle 'em to death."

"Yes, he'd kill 'em all the first night. What we want is some one to draw 'em six nights in a week and a matinee. Will you go over the way and have a nip?"

"No, thanks; I'm looking for an engagement for Sam here. Hope you may succeed in getting an opening. When will the company appear here?"

"Week after next, if I get the place."

"Hello, Grohman, by all that's holy!" exclaimed a young man, who ran across the street and grasped the advance agent's hand. "Glad to see you, old man. Where's the company now?"

"In Pittsburg," replied Grohman. "But who are you? I can't place you."

"I'm Sculper; played with the 'High Flyers' last year when you blazed away for us," replied the young man.

"Oh, yes, I remember you now. You went over the footlights at Elmira one night and broke up the orchestra while trying to dance a hornpipe."

"Yes, yes, and it made a big hit."

"The manager says it was a big jag," remarked Grohman very dryly.

"Oh, he didn't know. He can't appreciate a hit that isn't on the programme. He was so impudent behind the scenes I just blew him over and quit."

Fred laughed at the fellow's cheek and asked him if he was playing in the city.

"No, I am waiting for orders from any manager who wants me, though I have declined several offers lately because the parts were too small. I am no supé."

Grohman had a tired look on his face, and to get rid of Sculper told him to call on him at the Girard House, when he'd have a talk with him—that he was busy then. The youth went away, saying he'd be sure to call. The advance agent gazed after him till he was out of sight down the street, then turned to Fred with:

"You may think he's got cheek, but there are others whose cheeks are flinty in comparison; but his assurance is pretty hard to beat. He was with the 'High Flyers' last year and went on the stage so full of bug-juice that, in attempting to dance, he staggered over the footlights and broke up the orchestra; and when the manager took him to task about it, actually protested that he did it purposely to bring down the house. Of course the manager wouldn't have it and fired him."

"Well, it did bring down the house, didn't it?" Fred asked.

"Yes; the crowd roared, but still they all knew he was drunk, and it damaged the company not a little in that part of the State. It's just like any other business—got its share of black sheep."

"Well, you don't place Sam, here, in that category, do you?" Fred asked.

"Of course not. Innes is all right, but, like all other actors, he's adapted to certain roles in which he excels; but as a fun maker I hardly think he's a success."

CHAPTER III.

WHAT THE JANITOR'S WIFE SAID ABOUT FRED—THE BILL COLLECTOR, AND WHAT HE SAID.

On leaving Fred and Innes, Grohman invited the latter to call on him in the evening at the City Hotel.

"So you are not stopping at the Girard, then?" remarked Sam.

"No, of course not, and if you run up against Sculper again don't tell him where I am stopping."

"Say, Sam," remarked Fred, after Grohman left them, "he seems to be a pretty good sort of fellow."

"Yes, he's all right," returned Sam, "but of course he has nothing to do toward employing performers. He's a splendid advance agent and generally secures good quarters for the company wherever he goes, and at the very lowest possible rate. That's what makes him popular with managers. Still, I happen to know that he has been instrumental in securing positions for quite a number of actors, for he runs across them all over the country and frequently notifies the managers by wire of their location. There is scarcely any company on the road but what has trouble with some of their performers, and changes follow, hence if the manager knows the whereabouts of good substitutes he has little difficulty in filling the vacant places. I want to see him to-night, give him my address and ask him to remember it if he hears of an opening."

"That's a good thing to do," remarked Fred. "When the company comes here we'll go and see the manager."

"Say, Fred," suggested Sam, "why not go on again yourself?"

"Not for a thousand dollars a night, Sam. I had all the fun I wanted in that line last year, and the experience I had has been of some service to me, I think, but I don't care to go into it again. You will be up to the house to-night to see Phil, will you not?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, I'll be there, too, for he must be having a lonesome time of it among entire strangers."

The two parted, Fred to go to his hotel and Sam to the cheap lodging he occupied, where he paid up his rent and proceeded to fix himself up a bit in the matter of clean linen, so as to make as presentable an appearance as possible. Fred spent the greater part of the afternoon writing letters in his room and arranging to close up the business on which

his father had sent him. With that attended to, he would be foot loose, unless his father recalled him to attend to other matters for him.

"I wish Terry was here," he said to himself, "for this is an extremely dull town for one with no companionship. I had a little fun with that landlord this morning, but I suspect he intends to try to make me pay for it. If he has a political pull he might have me fined for it, but I can hardly conceive that he has the nerve to do it. I am more apprehensive of his getting that janitor of his to waylay me with a club or a sandbag."

That evening when he called to see Phil he found Sam had already arrived.

"How do you feel now, Phil?" he asked.

"Much better, Fred," Phil replied, "and if I keep on improving this way I'll be able to get out of here inside of a week."

"Well, don't overtax your strength," advised Fred. "You've got an entire month in which to recuperate, and by that time you may hear of an engagement somewhere."

"Say, Fred, sit down here," said Innes. "I've something rich to tell you." Fred took his seat by the side of the cynic, who told him that one of the landlady's house servants had been told by the wife of the janitor across the way that she was harboring a bad crowd."

"Oh, that's all right," laughed Fred. "I don't blame her for saying so when she looks at the decorations under the janitor's eyes."

"Oh, but she says that you are a prize fighter and a professional burglar, and that Phil and I both are your pals."

"Great Scott!" laughed Fred. "Anything else?"

"Isn't that enough?"

"Hardly. I like a big dose when I have to take one at all. But what does the landlady say about it?"

"Oh, she came right up to ask Phil about it, and he told her who you were, and referred her to a well-known clergyman here in the city who knows your father, and blessed if she didn't hurry right off to see him."

Fred whistled, and then further remarked:

"I don't blame her for that. It shows she wants to be on the safe side. Some landladies don't care a rap whom they take in, as long as they pay in advance."

"What did she say when she came back, Phil?"

"Oh, she was satisfied; said the preacher told her that Judge Fearnot was one of the wealthiest and ablest lawyers in New York city, as well as being right up with the Four Hundred socially, and a little later she brought her two daughters up to see me, and both were so sweet in their attentions it was entirely unnecessary to put any sugar in my tea. I'm afraid, though, I've gotten you into trouble."

"What sort of trouble?" Fred asked.

"Oh, I told them how you could sing and play on several instruments, and now they are determined to have you do so."

"Well, if you were not a sick man I would give you a few thumps for that, Phil. Your intentions were good, but they will make trouble for me."

"Oh, not a bit of it. Philadelphia is a dull town at best, and an evening or two with good-looking girls in the parlor is a ray of sunshine that one should be thankful for."

He had scarcely ceased speaking when the landlady entered, bearing a tray with some dainty refreshments for Phil, followed by her eldest daughter, who was really a fine-looking girl of some twenty years of age. Both Fred and Sam rose to their feet to greet the landlady, who, as soon as she placed the tray on the table, introduced her daughter, whom she said was a good nurse.

"Well," laughed Fred, as he looked at the young lady after shaking hands with her, "if you provide sick boarders with such nurses I'll come here and be sick, too."

"Well, we'd take good care of you," laughed the mother. "Most sick people like to be petted and a good many play sick in order to be waited on."

"Well, you can't blame them for that," Fred remarked, "although I'm not fond of playing the invalid. Phil has just been telling me that the janitor over the way says that I am very far from being a sick man."

"Yes," laughed the mother; "his wife says you are a low-down prize fighter and everything else that's bad, and warned me through one of my servants to look out for you; but we know all about him and the owner of that building, and nobody will believe them, even when they tell the truth. We've had a great many people living with us here for the last ten years, and have learned to know a gentleman whenever we see one."

Fred smiled all through himself when he remembered how quickly the landlady ran off to see the clergyman to find out whether he was a gentleman or not, but of course he said nothing about it. He made her a very low bow in acknowledgment of the compliment and remarked:

"If I am not one, it isn't because I don't try to be. I confess to soiling my hands with the landlord and the janitor over there this morning, but did it because I thought it was really a duty to them to do so. It is a pleasure to me to help a friend, and do unto him as I would like to have him do to me in the like circumstances. I believe that is what the preachers say is the very core of Christianity."

"Yes, yes," assented the landlady, who was not only a church member, but very assiduous in her attention to church duties. "A helping hand and kind word do more good in the world than all the preaching in every pulpit in the land."

"No doubt of that," returned Fred, "and sometimes a good thrashing is of more benefit than all the advice one can give."

"That depends upon who you thrash, doesn't it?" the young lady asked.

"Of course," he laughed, "and it depends also upon who the thrasher is. I believe it is the law of nature that runs through the entire animal kingdom, that thrashing should go on continuously. There is no animal, from man down to the smallest insect that doesn't fight and slay its kind."

"But isn't that wrong?" the young lady asked, looking at him with her eyes wide open. "The Bible says 'Thou shalt not kill.'"

"Yes, that's one of the Commandments," assented Fred, "and yet the same God that gave it told the children of Israel, when they went into the land of Canaan, to kill all the inhabitants, men, women and children, who had done them no harm whatever; and as for the lower animals, it is

a question whether it is a wrong, for they have no sense of right and simply follow the instinct that is natural with them. For all that, I am opposed to killing, or even fighting, save in self-defence, and I don't remember in all my life of every having struck a blow that wasn't in return for another or in resenting an insult that was worse than a blow; and as long as I live I intend that such shall be my guiding rule. I try to take life just as it comes, somewhat in the spirit of Byron's 'Farewell to Moore,' which, if I remember rightly, runs thus:

"Here's a tear for those who love me,
And a smile for those who hate;
Whatever skies above me,
Here's a heart for every fate."

"Oh, I've read that often," said the daughter. "Byron is one of my favorite poets."

"He is mine also," said Fred. "His poems are the finest in the language, for he gives vent to all the passions of the human heart. For all that, though, he was a sad, sad dog."

After a little more conversation the landlady told Fred that Phil had said he was a good singer, as well as a performer on the piano, and that she and her daughters were extremely anxious to have him play and sing for them.

"I don't mind playing," returned Fred, "but you must make Innes, here, do the singing."

"Not on your life!" blurted out Sam. "I never tried to sing but once in my life, and then I came near being mobbed. I am one of the best listeners in the world when Fearnot's singing. I don't mind reciting, and will do so gladly when you are tired of listening to Fred's singing."

The landlady invited them down into the parlor, and they all went, leaving the door of Phil's room open in order that he might hear, and for nearly an hour Fred and Sam entertained them with songs and recitations, with the result that the mother and two daughters were charmed beyond expression. The eldest of the two girls showed by her manner that she was deeply interested in Fred, and exerted herself to interest him.

At quite a late hour Fred and Sam returned to the sick room, to find Phil fast asleep; so they decided to leave the house without awaking him.

The next day a burly bill collector rang the door-bell and asked to see Mr. Phil Grimes.

"You can't see him," said the landlady. "He is ill in bed and under the care of a physician."

"Business is business, madam. I have a bill against him and must see him," said the fellow.

"Sick men never attend to business. You don't yourself. The doctor says he must not be disturbed."

"Never mind what the doctor says. I must see him, and——"

She shut the door in his face and he went away across the street to the house from which Phil had been moved. A little later Fred came and she told him how the fellow behaved.

"He has been instructed to worry it out of Phil, I guess," he remarked, "but he can't do it. That is a bill that will not be paid at present, but later on."

Just then a violent ring at the door-bell startled them.

"That must be him again," said the landlady. "I don't care to see him. I am afraid of him."

"Then let me go to the door," said Fred.

The burly red-faced fellow was there.

"I have a bill for six dollars against Phil Grimes," said he, drawing the bill from a number of others in his left hand.

"You were here an hour ago, were you not?" Fred asked him.

"Yes."

"And the landlady told you that Grimes was ill in bed and under the care of the doctor, did she not?"

"Yes, but business is business. This bill must be paid."

"But how can a sick man out of money pay any bills?"

"That's his lookout. He shouldn't make bills unless he means to pay 'em."

"Very true. The bill will be paid when he is able to go to work again."

"How do you know he will?"

"He says he will."

"Well, I want some assurance that he will. I must see him and——"

"You can't see him," said Fred, in a very determined tone of voice.

"Well, we'll see about that," and he attempted to push past Fred.

Quick as a flash Fred gave him a blow between the eyes that not only sent him staggering out of the door, but rolling down the stoop to the sidewalk, where he scrambled to his feet and ran up the steps again. Then Fred gave him another, after parrying a vicious blow aimed at his face, that sent him rolling down the second time.

"Do you think you can enter this house against the consent of the owner?" Fred asked him, stepping out on the stoop. "If so, keep on trying and see how near you can come to it."

The burly fellow picked himself up again, looked at Fred and blurted out:

"Come down and I'll smash you."

"No, I don't wish to be smashed," returned Fred, "but if you come here to annoy a sick man, or this family in the house, I'll break some of your bones and have you arrested besides. You are sent to blackmail us into paying that bill, but it won't work."

The collector again dared him to come down off the stoop, but Fred went inside and shut the door, where the landlady and her two daughters had been witnesses through the window blinds.

"Madam," said he, "I'm sorry you are subjected to such an annoyance, but I will go to the police captain in this precinct, explain the matter to him and see if the nuisance can't be abated."

"I would be glad if you would," she replied, "for it makes me so very nervous. I'm afraid I will be ill in consequence."

"He is going away," said the youngest daughter, peering through the window blind, and Fred stepped to her side to take a peep also. He found the fellow had simply gone across the street, where he was joined by the janitor.

"I guess he's waiting for me to leave the house, and I'd better go at once to the police station, and, until I return, you'd better not answer the ring of the door-bell at all."

"Go and see the doctor," suggested the landlady, "and if he will go with you to the station and complain of his patient being annoyed they'll arrest that fellow should he come back here again."

"I believe I will," said Fred, putting on his hat and leaving the house. When he reached the corner both the janitor and the burly collector ran across the street to intercept him. He stopped, placed his hand in his pistol pocket and coolly remarked:

"Better stop where you are, or I'll drop you both." The bluff worked admirably, for the janitor wheeled and ran back across the street, dived down into the basement of the building in his charge, and the collector slowly followed him, expressing very uncomplimentary opinions of any man who carried a gun. Fred went on his way chuckling, and a few minutes later rang the bell at the doctor's office. There he explained the situation to him, and the doctor remarked:

"I know the police captain well and will go with you to see him. That bill collector is one of old Rosenbaum's tenants, who tries to bully delinquents and force them to pay bills to get rid of him. He never goes to the expense of a lawyer unless absolutely compelled to."

They went to the police station, where the doctor explained the case. The captain very promptly ordered the officer on that post to arrest the bill collector if he again rang the door-bell where the sick man lived. Fred then returned to the boarding-house and informed the landlady what the instructions of the police captain were, which gave her great relief. He then went off down town to attend to some business again, and when he returned in the evening he learned that the collector had appeared the third time and rang the door-bell for nearly a half hour. She sent one of her hired girls after the policeman, whom she found some two blocks away, and the fellow was promptly arrested and taken to the station-house.

"Now," said she, "the officer came back and told me that I would have to appear in police court to-morrow morning to make charges against him. It's perfectly awful! I never was in a police court in my life, and I am so nervous that I don't think I can sleep a wink all night."

"Don't let it worry you, madam. I will be here in time to escort you to the court and tell your story for you, and I'll see the doctor, too, and have him appear, and if old Rosenbaum himself shows up I'll show him up in a way that will make him think that everything is vanity and vexation of spirit."

"But they might arrest you for striking him," said the landlady.

"Oh, I don't apprehend that. They'll have to do some pretty tall lying to throw any blame on me for what I've done."

"Will you hire a lawyer?" she asked.

"No; a lawyer is hardly necessary in a matter of this kind in a police court; besides, police justices don't like to be bothered with lawyers. They like simply to hear both

sides of a case without being lectured by a lawyer as to how he should decide it."

"Have you ever been in a police court?" she asked.

"Several times, but never as a prisoner."

That evening Fred and Sam Innes went out on the corner and interviewed the policeman who had made the arrest, and after telling him that he was the youth who had twice knocked the collector off the stoop, the officer looked him over and remarked:

"You must be a pretty hard hitter, for I know that fellow to be a pretty tough customer in a scrimmage."

"Oh, I've got the science of it," laughed Fred. "It's not so much the strength of a blow that knocks a man out as the science of giving it."

"You will have no trouble about having him fined to-morrow morning, because the judge is down on him and on Rosenbaum, too."

"Thank you," said Fred. "That is just what I want to know, and if you'll be there you'll see some fun."

CHAPTER IV.

FRED APPEARS IN A POLICE COURT AND MAKES A LIVELY SHOWING—"SERVED HIM RIGHT."

The next morning when the police court opened, Fred, Innes and the physician, accompanied by Phil's landlady, were on hand, and when the case against the collector was called Fred escorted the landlady to a place in front of the judge and stood by her side as she told her story. Then the doctor certified to the condition of Phil Grimes, adding at the same time that the man to whom he owed the six dollars had annoyed him in such a brutal way that, at the risk of his patient's life, he had him removed across the street, after which the burly collector began annoying the family by calling and ringing the bell, demanding payment of the bill several times daily.

"Well," said the judge, "there is no law to prevent a man from decently trying to collect money that is owing to him; at the same time he has no right to annoy other people in doing so. Why doesn't the young man pay the bill and thus put a stop to the annoyance?"

"He has no money, your honor," said the doctor. "This young man here (and the doctor laid his hand on Fred's shoulder) is paying his expenses at his present abode, as well as for my services."

The judge looked over his glasses at Fred and asked:

"What is your name, young man?"

"Fred Fearnot, your honor."

"How is it that in paying the expenses of this young friend of yours you haven't paid this bill of six dollars?"

"I have refused to pay it, judge," replied Fred, "on account of the brutality of the landlord to my sick friend."

"What sort of brutality?" the judge asked.

Fred proceeded to tell the story from beginning to end, and told it so eloquently that the judge permitted him to go on without interruption until he heard it all.

"So you took Rosenbaum by the back of the neck and ran him out of the room?" the judge asked.

"Yes, your honor."

"Served him right," remarked the judge; "and then you say you knocked out the janitor with three blows in the presence of two witnesses?"

"Yes, your honor, but not until he laid violent hands on me."

"Served him right," remarked the judge, "and I commend you for your good work. Did you give this prisoner here the decoration that he wears on his face?"

"Yes, your honor, but not until he tried to force his way into the house into which my sick friend had been taken."

"Served him right," returned the judge. "You did good work for one so young, and the fact that you didn't accept his invitation to come down on the street and fight him shows that you were simply on the defensive all the time."

"Judge," exclaimed Rosenbaum, who was sitting back among the spectators, "that young man was an intruder on my premises when he laid violent hands on me, and the law says that a man's house is his castle. I demand that he be punished for attacking me in my own house, which he had entered without my knowledge or consent."

"How about that, young man?" asked the judge, looking over his glasses at Fred, who detected a good-natured twinkle in his eye.

"It is true, your honor," Fred answered, "I was there without his knowledge or consent, and I presume I fired him out of the room of my sick friend also without his consent. And out in the hallway, after he had kicked me backward, like a donkey, I kicked him forward like a gentleman, which was against his consent also, I presume; but when I first laid hands on him he was in the room of my sick friend, who had rented it from him and in which, owner of the building as he is, he was the intruder; and if it is true that a man's home is his castle, that room was Phil Grimes' castle, and as a friend I defended the castle for him and fired the intruder out, and, if your honor will permit me to do so, I will say that I never took as much pleasure in anything in my life, nor did I ever before soil my hands with anything in human shape that was such a thorough and complete hog. I've washed my hands several times since then, using double the usual quantity of soap, but somehow there seems to remain an almost indelible stain upon them. I have met fiends in human shape before, who were utterly without heart or bowels of compassion, but this one is the lowest, the most contemptible and with less redeeming traits about him than any I ever ran up against; and were it in my power to do so I would not only kick him when awake, but lash him in his dreams until he would wish for the protection of his coffin, six feet under ground, to get rid of me. He is a disgrace to the name and shape of man, and men who serve him are no better," and with that he turned, faced the bill collector and denounced him in such scathing terms for his brutal talk to the landlady on his first appearance at her door, that the villain turned pale and cowed like a whipped spaniel.

When he ceased speaking the judge fined the collector ten dollars and costs, and warned him against repeating the offence.

"Judge," called out Rosenbaum, "do you rule that I have no right to try to collect the money owing me?"

"No," said the judge, "but I do rule that if you or any other man seek to annoy one who is sick and in the hands of a physician, I'll protect him to the full extent of the law."

Then he turned to the landlady and remarked:

"Madam, if you are again annoyed on account of this debt of your boarder, have the offender arrested and brought into this court."

Fred turned to the landlady, offered her his arm and led her triumphantly out of the court-room, passing close by Rosenbaum. Out on the street, she clutched his arm and exclaimed:

"My, what a lashing you gave him! I am so glad I was there to hear it."

"I was glad to get the chance," laughed Fred, "for of all men I ever ran up against he is undoubtedly the meanest."

"Say, Fearnot," said the doctor as he accompanied them part of the way home, "why don't you turn your attention to the practice of law?"

"It's what my father wishes me to do," was the reply, "and it is probable that I may yet. It isn't the gift of gab, though," he laughed, "that makes the lawyer, but the knowledge of law and how to apply it. It isn't the first time that I have flayed brutes like those two, and, while I am not vindictive, I am a firm believer in the idea of giving a man just what he deserves, let it be praise or censure."

"Of course, of course! Every honest man feels the same way," said the doctor, "but I don't think I ever heard a man get a worse lashing than those two, but it was like water dropping on a duck's back so far as Rosenbaum is concerned, for he never changed color nor winced, while the collector actually turned pale and trembled. Rosenbaum is impervious to any censure that can be heaped upon him."

"Oh, he has the hide of a rhinoceros."

On reaching home the landlady hastened to tell her daughters what had happened in the court-room, and how Fred had talked to the judge about Rosenbaum and the bill collector, declaring that it was the most stinging thing she had ever heard.

In the meantime, upstairs, the cynic repeated the story to Phil with such fine effect as to cause him to laugh till he was almost hysterical.

"Great Scott, Sam!" exclaimed Fred as he listened to him, "Grohman said the other day you had no fun in you. The next time I get in a scrape like that I'll put you forward to make a speech."

"Oh, I can't make an original speech," returned Sam, "but I believe I could repeat, almost word for word, everything you said in the court-room."

"You have a splendid memory, then?"

"Yes. I don't see how one could forget such a scathing talk as that, which was all the better because the two victims were compelled to take it without talking back."

"Oh, that's where I had 'em," laughed Fred, "for in a court-room it's just like it is in church. You can't interrupt the speaker, no matter what he says about you."

"Sorry I couldn't be there to hear it, Fred," said Phil. "I think the laugh I've had has done me more good than

anything that has happened in a week. What will poor old Rosenbaum do now?"

"Oh, I suppose he'll sit around, bite his finger-nails and think about his great love for me."

"Oh, he doesn't love you any; yet he'd throw his arms around your neck and kiss you were you to pay him that six dollars."

"I wouldn't let him do that for six thousand dollars," replied Fred, with a look of disgust on his face.

That evening a poorly-dressed and pale-faced young woman called at the house and asked to see the landlady, who met her in the parlor.

"I am a poor seamstress," said the visitor, "and have been doing some work for Mrs. Rosenbaum, and for a bill of five dollars and a quarter her husband has given me an account of six dollars that is owing him by a tenant of his who has moved over to your house. He told me that I could have the whole of it for what he owes me, and I called to see if the young man will pay it."

"My, what a mean man!" exclaimed the landlady. "The young man is sick and without a penny, and a friend of his is paying his board here, but refuses to pay that bill because of Mr. Rosenbaum's meanness to him. I wouldn't take the account if I were you."

The look of distress on the young woman's face on hearing that touched the landlady's heart, who said to her:

"Keep your seat, and I will go up stairs and see Mr. Fearnot about it."

"Oh, the young man who owes the six dollars is named Grimes," said the seamstress.

"Yes, I know, but Mr. Grimes hasn't a cent, for he has been very ill for nearly a month. Mr. Fearnot is paying his expenses since the last three or four days."

The landlady went up stairs and told Fred about it.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed, "that's the worst yet. Do you know the young woman?"

"No, I do not," replied the landlady, "but I judge from her looks that she is very poor and in need of the money."

"Well, I've made up my mind that I'll see old Rosenbaum way yonder and down below before I'll pay him that six dollars. I'll buy her account from her and sue the old scoundrel for it, so he'll have to pay it after all," and he went down stairs with the landlady to see the seamstress. He was soon convinced that she was an honest, industrious young widow. He told her the story of Rosenbaum's treatment of Grimes and offered to buy her account against Rosenbaum, provided she would appear as a witness for him if he had to sue to get the money. She said she would gladly do so, but didn't know that she could afford to lose the time.

"Oh, I'll pay you for your time," replied Fred. "I only wish to get even with the old villain."

"Very well, then; if you'll pay me for any time that I may lose I'll do so."

Fred went back up stairs, wrote out a bill of sale of the account, which he took down to the seamstress, who promptly signed it and received the amount of it in cash, much to her relief. The next day he placed the account in the hands of a bill collector, whose name was given him by the corner grocer where the landlady traded, with instructions to de-

mand the payment of it; and a day later the collector reported that Rosenbaum swore by all the saints in the calendar that he wouldn't pay it; that it was a bill for Grimes to pay and not him. The next day Fred himself took the bill to Rosenbaum and told him that Grimes didn't owe any bill for sewing, and had nothing to do whatever with it.

"But I paid her the bill with Grimes' account," protested the old rascal.

"Oh, no," returned Fred, "she says that you offered to do so, and she called at the house to see if Grimes would pay it. He couldn't do so, of course, so I bought her account against you, and if you don't pay it I'll sue you within twenty-four hours and attach your property."

"I won't pay it!" said the old man.

"All right," returned Fred. "If you think you won't pay it, and feel sure about it, why not bet one hundred dollars against fifty that I can't make you pay it?"

"I don't want to have anything to do with you," retorted the old fellow.

"I'm quite sure of that," replied Fred, "but I've taken a great fancy to you and like to return favors. I gave the poor woman the money to save her from distress and at the same time have a little fun with you. You are a pretty sharp old chap, but you don't keep pace with the progress of the age. You've got a beard and I haven't, but I think I know a few things that you don't," and with that he walked away, sought out a young lawyer who was very anxious to get something to do, paid him a retainer of five dollars and told him to hustle and crowd the old man right up to the limit.

"Don't send him any notice," said he, "but begin suit at once, and pile up the costs against him as far as you can."

"But," said the lawyer, "the law requires that I should give notice before beginning the suit."

"Oh, I've already given him notice," returned Fred, "but if you think it best to do so give him twenty-four hours' notice and then rush things."

The young lawyer did as Fred requested, and immediately notified Rosenbaum that unless the account was paid within twenty-four hours he would begin suit and attach his property. He paid no attention to the notice, thinking that his statement that he had paid the debt with Grimes' account would be a sufficient offset to it. He was too miserly to go to the expense of consulting a lawyer about it, and so twenty-four hours later suit was entered against him. He went to the justice in whose court the suit was begun and stated his side of the case.

"This is not the day for the trial of the case," said the justice, "and I can give you no advice about it. You'd better see your lawyer."

"I don't want any lawyer," he replied. "I paid the bill once and don't intend to pay it again." A young lawyer who was standing by turned to him and asked:

"What did you pay it with?"

"With another account against a tenant of mine."

"Well, that is no payment, unless she accepted it as such, and unless you can show a receipt from her you'll have to pay in cash."

"Is that the law?" Rosenbaum asked, turning to the justice.

"Of course it is," returned the magistrate.

He went out almost bursting with wrath, and called on the seamstress to make her give him a receipt for the account against Grimes.

"This is all the receipt I will give you," she returned, handing him his account against Phil. He refused to take it, whereupon she thrust it into his coat pocket. He took it out, threw it back at her, when she took the broom and swept it out of the door.

"You'll get no more work from my wife," said he.

"I don't wish any more," she retorted, "for the pay wouldn't keep a mouse alive."

CHAPTER V.

HOW FRED GOT A PLACE FOR SAM—"DIVIDE WITH THE SICK MAN."

A few days after the suit was begun against Rosenbaum for his little debt to the seamstress the latter called at the boarding-house to see Fred and tell him about the old man trying to get a receipt from her for Grimes' account, saying that she thought it was her duty to let him know.

"Well, if you give him such a receipt I'll lose my money. I don't care so much for the amount, but I do want to make the old rascal pay it, and if he fights it in the justice court you'll have to be there as a witness. Of course this is disagreeable for any woman."

"Oh, I'd be glad to do so, because he is the meanest man I ever worked for in my life. I get about ten dollars' worth of work a year from his wife, and it is more bother to get the money than to earn it, as he tries to make everybody who works for him take bad debts in payment."

"Well, whatever trouble you are put to I will give you that debt as compensation, so, after all, it's your case against him and not mine."

"That's very kind of you," said she.

"Well, really," laughed Fred, "I don't know whether it is a kindness on my part so much as the vindictiveness I feel against him. At any rate, I am willing for you to have the benefit of it, while I take the satisfaction of making him pay it, so for the time being we are partners in business. Perhaps the landlady here might be able to give you some work, although it's possible that she and her daughters may have a sewing-machine themselves. I will inquire about it and let you know."

The seamstress thanked him and went away, while Fred returned up stairs to tell Phil how Rosenbaum was still trying to make him pay the six dollars.

"It was a cute trick on his part," he added, "to turn it over to a young woman, thinking that a story of distress from her would force me to pay it; as it is, I've turned the tables on him by buying his debt to her and forcing him to pay costs of the suit. I rather think that I'm ahead so far."

"I'm sorry, Fred, that I am the cause of your being put to so much trouble and expense," returned Phil.

"Don't worry, my boy; I'm having lots of fun with the old fellow, and when we get you upon your feet again I'll feel

amply repaid for all the trouble and expense. A man is in a bad fix when he has no friends."

"Yes, indeed," assented Phil; "but so far you've been the best friend to me I have ever had."

"Well, some day you may be able to do as much for some other fellow, and I believe you would."

"Yes, I would, because you have taught me what the value of a true friend is in the hour of need."

While they were talking they heard the door-bell ring, and a few minutes later Sam Innes came up and shook hands with the two.

"Say, Fred," said Sam, "I was halted by two men on the corner who were about to club me, when one said to the other, 'Hold up, Bill, he isn't the one,' so they let me go. Hanged if I don't believe they took me for you. I couldn't see their faces very well, but one of them looked very much like the janitor across the street."

"Yes, I'd bet it was him, and the other fellow that bill collector," laughed Fred, "and if you'll go with me I'll go out and have some fun with them."

"Oh, I wouldn't do that, Fred," said Phil; "they've got clubs and are probably armed to do you up."

"Of course they are, but I happen to be armed to-night myself, and I simply want Sam along as a witness to what happens."

"I'm not armed," said Innes.

"Oh, one gun is enough," laughed Fred. "When they find out that I'm armed they'll skip out; but I want to catch one of them and turn him over to the police. Don't think anybody will be hurt at all, so come ahead, Sam."

The two went down stairs, passed out the front door and walked toward the corner. The two men were standing there, just about where Sam had met them, and when they saw Fred approaching stepped out to the middle of the sidewalk as if to intercept him. He stopped and looked at them, with a hand in his pocket, and asked:

"Am I the man you are looking for?"

"We are not looking for anybody," said one of them.

"But you stopped this friend of mine here, and on finding that he was not the one you were looking for let him go. I came out to see if I am the one."

"We are not looking for anybody," said the janitor, whose face was pretty well muffled up.

"Well, I didn't know," laughed Fred. "I thought I would come out and see. I know you, janitor, for all you have tried to hide your face, and that friend of yours there is the bill collector, although as a collector I think he is a failure. Whenever either one of you wish to see me send word to me, and you'll find me always ready to respond to your invitation."

"You go on about your business," said the janitor; "we don't want anything to do with you."

"I don't believe you do," laughed Fred, "unless you can catch me alone when you think I'm not armed and you've got a friend to help you out. I want to say to you that as long as you've started out on that sort of a racket, it will be the part of wisdom for you to make a bargain with the undertaker at low rates. I'm willing to pay for the digging of the grave, but am not willing to put up for the

hearse and the coffin, unless I can get special rates with the undertaker myself."

That sort of talk was too much for the janitor, who turned away and walked across the street, followed by his companion, whereupon Fred and Sam both burst into a regular horse laugh and returned to the house which they had just left.

"I told you, Phil," laughed Fred, as he entered the sick room, "that nobody would be hurt. I bluffed them both so thoroughly they retired in disgust."

"They are laying for you, though, Fred," said Sam, shaking his head, "and I'm sorry I have no gun myself. I'm afraid they'll try to take it out of me just because I went down with you."

"Well, I'll lend you my gun," said Fred.

"But what will you do?"

"Oh, I'll bluff them."

A little later the physician came in and greeted the two boys very pleasantly.

"Doctor," Fred asked, "how long before you can have Phil up on his feet?"

"He ought to be up in a week or ten days," replied the doctor. "He has been a very sick boy, and is yet very weak. It's a species of slow fever that taxes one's strength very severely."

"Well, do your best for him, Doc, and when you want any money just say so."

"All right. I'm treating him to the very best of my judgment, but am free to say that a change of quarters and the nourishing food he is getting are doing more to bring about his recovery than any medicine that I can prescribe. Have you seen Rosenbaum lately?"

"Not in three days," answered Fred.

"Well, he came to my office to-day and offered to sell me his account against our young friend here for four dollars."

"Did he, indeed, doctor?" Fred asked.

"Yes, and I told him I would have nothing to do with it."

"Well, please remember the date, doctor, for he turned the account over to another in payment of a debt that he owed, and it was returned to him. He's being sued for his debt, and I understand that he claims that he paid it with Grimes' account. If he offered it to you to-day I may be able to get a grip on him in a way that will astonish him."

"All right," returned the physician, "I'll make a memorandum of it right now. I had a patient in my office at the time, who was a witness of what passed between us."

"So much the better," returned Fred. "Please don't say anything about it, as I want to catch the old fellow in that snap, for if he swears in the justice court that he had paid the seamstress with the account and that she accepted it, and that in consequence his indebtedness was paid, I'll have him indicted for perjury as sure as fate."

"I can hardly conceive that he will dare do that," remarked the doctor.

"Well, it does seem incredible, but he's the worst I ever ran up against in my life, and I'm extremely anxious to show him what a boy can do when he tries. So far, he hasn't got his six dollars yet out of Phil, but I want Phil to pay it when he gets well and earns it, so as to keep his

word with the old rascal. I believe in every man paying his just debts, and I would have paid that for Phil had he been treated decently."

"Oh, nobody can blame you," remarked the doctor, "and I'm really glad you've got the upper hand of the old fellow. He owns a great deal of property, perhaps to the value of a quarter of a million, and I don't believe that his actual living expenses amount to over six hundred dollars a year."

The doctor then gave some instructions to his patient after which he went away, saying that he would call again on the morrow.

Soon after the doctor left Innes informed Fred and Phil that the 'Fun Makers of Gotham' company would open for a week the next evening, and asked Fred to go with him to see the manager, as he entertained a slight hope that he might be able to get an engagement with him. Of course Fred promised to do so, and a little later they left Phil for the night and went to the hotel where the advance agent of the company had secured quarters for them. They found, however, that the company had not yet arrived, so they parted for the night, each going to his quarters. The next morning Sam appeared at Fred's hotel and told him the company had reached the city.

"All right," said Fred, "we'll go round and see them," and they started off forthwith and in due time reached the hotel where the company was domiciled. In looking over the register Sam gave a sudden start, nudged Fred with his elbow and pointed to the name of Elsie Warner as one of the company.

"Good," said Fred, "she may be able to pay you the little loan you made to her."

"Well, I hope so," returned Sam, "but hanged if I'll ask her for it."

"Well, I don't know that I would, either," remarked Fred, "but you might let her know what your fix is so as to give her a chance to reciprocate."

"Ah! here comes the manager now," said Sam, as a well-dressed, middle-aged man approached the clerk's desk.

"Hello, Innes!" exclaimed the manager, extending his hand to him, "what are you doing here?"

"Waiting to see you," answered Sam.

"Waiting to see me, eh?"

"Yes; I dreamed last night that you needed me in your company."

"Well, that's bad for you, because dreams go by contraries, you know."

"That's it," laughed Sam, "for I dreamed that I asked you for an engagement and you kicked me out. That's why I feel sure that it's all right."

"Well, that's a good one," laughed the manager.

Sam introduced him to Fred, and the moment he caught the name of Fearnot he looked sharply at him and remarked:

"Glad to see you, Fearnot; I've heard of you before. There's a young lady in my company who has spoken of you often as a good all-round fellow in any and every thing."

"The deuce you say! Who is she?"

"Elsie Warner. There's her name on the register."

Both Fred and Sam turned and inspected the register as though they had not already done so.

"Well, I should be glad to see her," returned Fred, "and am glad to know that she's in good a good company. What kind of work is she doing?"

"Oh, she's doing good work and is the understudy of the leading lady besides."

"Is she comeatable just now?" Fred asked.

"Yes, I believe she is. You might send your card up and have her come down to the parlor."

Fred and Sam both sent their names up to the young lady and a few minutes later they were shown up to the ladies' parlor, where they found Miss Warner, who was a very pronounced blond. She greeted both with a great deal of cordiality.

"I can never forget your kindness to all the girls in Hammond's company last year," she said to Fred. "But for you we should have all been stranded hundreds of miles away from home. We were stranded last winter, and I believe all the boys had to count the cross ties, but they were kind enough to pay the fares of the girls back to New York. Sam, here, paid mine, and I am glad that he is here, for I can return him the money out of this week's salary, for we are billed here for the week."

"Bless your heart!" exclaimed Sam. "I'm here on my uppers, and but for Fred would have been compelled to eat cobblestones."

"He's good to his friends, isn't he?" she said, turning to Sam.

"I should say he was!"

She then took a seat and made room for Fred at her side, where they talked for upward of an hour. She several times expressed a wish that he were with the company. The leading lady came in, and she introduced him to her. She was a tall, slender young lady, with a very stagy air about her, which Fred very quickly recognized.

In the meantime Sam went down stairs to see the manager again, and while he was talking with him a member of the company came up and reported that Joe Billups was very ill up in his room.

"What's the matter with him?" the manager asked.

"I don't know. He's asked me to get a doctor for him."

"Thunder!" exclaimed the manager. "I must see about that," and he hurried up stairs to the actor's room, where he found Billups in bed with a high fever, although he had retired at midnight happy and well.

"What's the matter, Joe?" he asked.

"I don't know; but I'm very sick."

The doctor soon put in an appearance, and after examining the patient pronounced him a very sick man.

"Won't he be able to perform to-night, doctor?" the manager asked.

"No, nor in a week."

"What's the matter with him?"

"He has a high fever and a combination of other troubles."

"Well, attend to him," said the manager, "as I've got to go at once in search of a substitute, for we open here in the city to-night for a week's engagement."

The manager returned down stairs and went to Fred, who was still with the ladies in the parlor.

"Say, Fearnot," said he, as he walked up to Fred, "one of the company is very sick up in his room, which plays the deuce with me unless I can find a competent man to take his place. What do you say to trying your hand at it yourself?"

"Not on your life!" laughed Fred. "I've had all the fun I want on the boards."

"Well, you'll help a fellow out of a difficulty, won't you?"

"Oh, of course I will. I can find you a good one inside of five minutes."

"Oh, do please take it yourself, Mr. Fearnot," urged Miss Warner.

"Not for a thousand dollars," shaking his head. "I don't need it, but Sam Innes does."

The manager shook his head and remarked:

"I'm afraid to risk him. He's not suited for the role."

"Oh, well, you just tell Sam what you want him to do, and if he doesn't do it, I'll pay the salary. He's a cynical cuss, but a hard worker."

"Take it yourself and name your figures," returned the manager.

"Not for a thousand dollars a night, while you can get Sam for a great deal less."

As the manager had no time to lose, he turned abruptly and went down stairs, where he told Innes he'd give him a show.

"All right," replied Sam; "give me the cue and I'll get to work at once."

The part he was to play was given him forthwith, and Sam went up stairs to the ladies' parlor, making three steps at a bound, to inform Fred that luck had come to him at last, though he was sorry the poor fellow up stairs was sick.

"Well, it all comes in a lifetime, Sam. Good luck to you, and if the sick man needs it divide your pay with him, for it will come back to you some day fourfold."

CHAPTER VI.

A NEW TROUBLE, AND WHAT IT WAS.

On leaving the ladies Fred hunted up Sam, found him studying the role he was to play and asked him how he liked it.

"Fred, it's a good one!" he said. "It's better than any I've ever had before, and if I can go through it all right it will fix me for the future."

"Have you seen it played?" Fred asked.

"Yes. I know pretty well what the action is all through it."

"Well, come around to my room with me, and let me hear you read it over in your best style."

The two hurried back to Fred's hotel, and up in his room Sam read the part to him with a great deal of dramatic style.

"That's a good one, Sam," remarked Fred. "Read it over again," and as he did so Fred watched and listened in-

tently, and in a few minutes made some suggestions that startled him and looked at him in amazement.

"That's never been done before," he remarked.

"Perhaps not," returned Fred, "but all the same I think it would make a hit, and that's just what you want to do; the more fun you make the better the hit."

Sam wrote down on a separate piece of paper the suggestions made, and while he was doing so Fred jotted down three or four local gags which he thought would take immensely with a Philadelphia audience.

"Don't say a word about it, Sam, but fire them off and take the responsibility. If the manager doesn't like it he'll tell you so, and if he does you'll probably hear of it."

"By George, Fred, the more I think of it the better I like it; and now I want you to see if I can get them off all right," and with Fred for his audience Sam waded in to rehearse the part. He had a splendid memory and had to be prompted but very little. Two of the gags were excruciatingly funny, and he got them off in such a droll way that Fred himself laughed heartily.

"You are all right, Sam. I'll take a box seat to-night to see you through, and hire some old washwoman to throw a bouquet at you."

"Oh, none of your tricks, now, Fred; this is my chance."

The two spent the afternoon together at the hotel, until Sam had thoroughly mastered his role, after which they returned to where the company were stopping. The first one they met on entering was the manager, who seemed to be both nervous and blue.

"How are you getting on with it, Sam?" he asked of Innes.

"I've got it down fine, sir," Sam replied.

"Well, I confess that I'm greatly worried about it."

"Well, you needn't be," remarked Fred, "for I've heard him rehearse. He's all right and I'll wager a little supper for us three that you'll be pleased."

"Well, I hope I will. If he can do as well as Billups has been doing I'll be surprised, because it's out of his line."

"Oh, there's more in him than you think for," returned Fred. "I'm no actor myself, but I know a good one when I see him."

"Well, Miss Warner tells me that you have more humor in you than any one she has ever seen, and she's not the only one I've heard say that; hence I was anxious to have you take the place yourself."

"I'm not in the profession," laughed Fred, "but I'll be in the box to-night at the right or left of the stage, and will pay you for it now if you will give me an order that secures it to me."

"All right," and the manager promptly wrote out an order for the box for five people. Fred paid for it and at once set out for Phil's boarding-house, where he informed the landlady and her two daughters that he had secured a private box for them at the performance that evening. Of course the two daughters were delighted, and the mother, who was a widow, was by no means angry with him on account of it; so they were all in their seats in the box when the curtain rose on the first scene. The audience was a pretty good one, but the house was by no means packed. The play was a rollicking one, full of wit and humor, with

a great many comical situations. Fred was watching the manager when Sam got off his first local gag, which set the house in a roar.

"Good, good!" exclaimed the manager, as Sam fired them off. "Capital, capital! I didn't think it was in him," and when Sam retired behind the scenes he grasped his hand, slapped him on the shoulder and told him he was all right.

"Of course I am," replied Sam, very coolly. "All I wanted was a chance, and before the week ends you'll have to prop up the walls on the outside, for I'll draw such a crowd that it will make them bulge."

"All right, let 'em bulge. The box-office will hold all the money that comes in, and you'll get your share of it."

Fred waited for Sam after the performance and congratulated him.

"Now, take one of these young ladies and we'll go out for a supper before returning home."

In a nearby restaurant they made a lively little supper party of five, and Sam then and there told Fred that he was indebted to him for his good fortune, and would not only remember him as long as he lived, but would do his singing for him in heaven every time he caught a cold.

"That's all right, Sam; pay your debts on this side of the grave. I don't want to take any chances of running up with you on the other side. The road forks at the grave, you know, and we may go in opposite directions."

"Oh, my!" exclaimed the widow, "you shouldn't talk so lightly of such things."

"Oh, that's all right," returned Fred; "we have to do our talking in this life, for if Sam goes below, I'll never have a chance to talk with him again."

"Well, if you are going up there, why not make it your duty to take him along with you?" the widow suggested. Fred shook his head, and with a very dubious expression on his face remarked:

"I'm afraid to risk it. He's a heavy load to carry; besides, it will be about all I can do to get a pair of wings for myself." Sam exploded with laughter, but the eldest daughter remarked:

"Well, I'm sure you ought to get up there all right, for if ever there was a good Samaritan you are certainly that one."

"Well, I don't know. I'm afraid the little good I'm trying to do for my sick friend will be offset by my trouble With Rosenbaum."

"Why, you are not obliged, legally or morally, to pay him that six dollars," said the young lady, "and I'm sure I'd see him way yonder before I did."

"Oh, it isn't the financial part of it," Fred replied; "it's the pleasure I've taken in worrying him about it, and I must confess to a feeling of vindictiveness in that quarter."

"Well, one can't blame you for that, I'm sure."

"Perhaps not; yet it is not admissible, according to the Christian's creed, if I understand it aright."

The little party returned to the boarding house in high spirits. When they reached the house Fred and Sam went up to see how Phil was getting along. They were surprised to find him awake and with an extremely high fever. He said that he was suffering great pain, and had been growing

worse ever since early in the evening. It was then after midnight.

"Sam," said Fred, turning to Innes, "you'd better go for the doctor; tell him that Phil is in great pain and has a high fever."

Sam hurried away, while Fred summoned the landlady to see if she knew what could be done while awaiting the arrival of the physician. She came up, felt his pulse, shook her head and remarked:

"He has a burning fever. I really don't know what to do. We'd better wait till the doctor comes, as he lives but a short distance from here."

The doctor came, and was very much surprised to find his patient in such a condition. It was entirely unexpected, and he made inquiries of the landlady concerning his food, and when she told him what he had eaten that evening he said:

"That could have done him no harm."

Phil himself said he had eaten nothing else, and that he didn't know when his fever came on, as he awoke out of a sleep of several hours with the fever on, and in pain from head to feet. The doctor remained with him the rest of the night, watching the case and fighting the fever, and when morning came he had it somewhat abated, but the patient was weak and restless.

"It is simply a bad turn," said the doctor, "and he must have some one with him to administer his medicine regularly and see that he is kept quiet all the time."

"I'll do that," said Fred, "for Sam here has an engagement that takes up all his time."

"Very well," said the doctor, "a professional nurse would be better, but we can tell more about it after a day or two."

"There's help enough in the house, here, doctor," said the landlady, "and we will be only too glad to render any needed service."

"Oh, I don't need any nurse," said Phil.

"You keep quiet, Phil," returned Fred; "you've got nothing to say about it at all."

"All right; I'll have something to say about it when I get up, though."

"Well, wait till you do get up."

Fred returned to his hotel, paid his bill and had his effects moved to the boarding house, where he took up his quarters to assist in taking care of his sick friend.

Along in the afternoon the door bell rang and a visitor was shown into the sitting room who asked to see the landlady. It proved to be the agent of the owner of the house, who came to inform her that the property had been sold to Rosenbaum, and that he would take possession of it on the first of the month, which was but a week away.

She was thunderstruck, and asked the agent how Rosenbaum came to make the purchase.

"He has had a mortgage on it for five years," said the agent, "and as the owner couldn't pay the last quarter's interest he has sold the property to Rosenbaum, who paid him the difference in cash."

"Well, I'm sorry to hear it," she said, "for I don't like the man. He has the reputation of being a very exacting landlord."

"Oh, you'll have no trouble with him as long as you pay your rent."

"Perhaps not; but he'll make no repairs, and if I should be just one day behind with my rent he'll make it extremely unpleasant for me."

"Yes," the agent admitted, with a shrug of his shoulders, "he hasn't a very good name with his tenants. I felt it my duty to come and notify you in time."

"Have you another house," she asked, "on your list anywhere in this neighborhood?"

"Yes; No. 122 in this same block will be vacant on the first of the month, and the rent is the same that you are paying here."

"Can I have it if I wish to move?"

"Of course you can, for I know you to be a good tenant."

"Well, I'll let you know in a day or two."

The agent went away, and that evening when the doctor called she asked him if it was possible for his patient to be moved to another house in the same block.

"I'm afraid not," he replied. "Do you wish to get rid of him?"

"Bless you, no!" and she then told him what the trouble was.

"Oh, well, you will be here for a week yet, and we hope before that time the patient will be much better than he is at present. I am surprised that the ownership of the property should pass into Rosenbaum's hands. I suppose, however, that the owner was hard up for money, and Rosenbaum probably got a bargain. He's always on the lookout to acquire property that way."

When Fred heard the news he was somewhat staggered, as the thought occurred to him that Rosenbaum had bought the property for spite, in order to make sure of a chance to annoy him so as to force the payment of the pitiful sum of six dollars; but when the landlady told him what the agent had said, he concluded that he bought the property at a bargain, as he was not the man to pay out any money for revenge.

"What are you going to do about it?" he asked the landlady.

"I haven't made up my mind yet," she replied. "It's a great deal of trouble to move, and yet I don't like the idea of having such a man to deal with. Sometimes I have from the first to the fifth of the month in which to pay my rent, which is one thousand dollars a year; but I've been told that Rosenbaum calls on his tenants on the first of each month, before they can get to the breakfast table, and if the money is not ready for him, he threatens eviction if it is not paid in three days. Before I make up my mind what to do I must find out whether my boarders will go with me if I move."

"Well, you can count on me going with you," said Fred, "and remaining as long as I stay in the city. I'm going to see Phil through, if it takes a year and a day. If he raises the rent on you, move, but don't let him know that you mean to do so."

Fred refrained from letting Phil know what new trouble was brewing, for the poor fellow was very ill. He sat up with him that night till long past midnight. Then he retired to a cot which had been placed in the room for him.

The next day Rosenbaum called to see the landlady,

showed her the papers that established his ownership of the property, and remarked that he would be pleased to have her remain as a tenant.

"I don't wish to be your tenant, Mr. Rosenbaum," she remarked. "I've lived in this house ten years, and was never more than one week behind in paying my rent, which is one thousand dollars a year. I know two of your tenants, and have heard them say that you call for your rent on the first of each month before they have time to eat their breakfast."

"Well, I expect my rent on the first of each month from all my tenants," remarked Rosenbaum, "but if you want till the fifth of each month you can have it, and I will not call for it until that day. The rent will be eleven hundred dollars a year."

"You are going to raise the rent one hundred dollars a year, are you?"

"Yes; you've been paying the same rent for ten years past for this house, during which time property has advanced a great deal, and your present landlord would ask that or more from any new tenant that came in."

"Well, I won't pay it, Mr. Rosenbaum; I'll move out."

"It would cost you more to move," he remarked, "unless you can get all your boarders to go with you, for I think some of them will object to leaving the neighborhood."

"Well, I'll see."

"You will let me know, will you?"

"Yes, but I can't say when."

"You have a boarder here by the name of Grimes, haven't you?"

"Yes, and he is still sick in bed."

"Can I see him?" he asked.

"Certainly not, for he is much worse than when he came here."

"He owes me six dollars."

"Yes, I've heard about it, and I heard too that you stood up at the foot of his bed, as he lay there helpless, and abused him and called him a dead beat. Surely you didn't do such a thing?"

He changed color, and remarked that he didn't know what he said, as he was very much annoyed by an impudent young man who was present at the time.

"Yes, that was Mr. Fearnot, I believe, and I heard the judge in the police court tell him that when he put you out of the room he did right. You can understand from all that, Mr. Rosenbaum, why I do not wish to be a tenant of yours. My present landlord never sent or came for his rent, but always left it with me to take or send it to him or his agent."

"Oh, I won't give you any trouble," and with that Rosenbaum arose, put on his hat and left the house.

The landlady immediately informed Fred of her interview with Rosenbaum, and what he had said about not worrying her over the matter of rent.

"But," she added, "he's raised the rent one hundred dollars a year, and I can't afford to pay it."

"Don't do it," advised Fred. "Throw the house on his hands; it will take him months to find a tenant for the whole house. He'll have to put a janitor in here to rent

out single rooms to transients or lodgers. See your boarders and find out if they will all go with you."

"Oh, they'll all go," she assured him, "as it's only four doors above here in the same block, and the same kind of a house as this, precisely. But what will you do if Mr. Grimes is still too ill to be moved?"

"Why, I'll let him stay where he is. Move out everything except the furniture in that room. If the doctor says it will endanger his life to move him, he can't be moved, that's all."

CHAPTER VII.

"A LOW DOWN DEAD BEAT."—FRED MATCHES HIS CUNNING WITH AN OLD LIMB OF THE LAW.

Two days after Rosenbaum called at the house the landlady secured No. 122 in the same block, which was in the hands of the same agent to whom she had been paying rent for years; and when she had done so Fred asked her to please say to Rosenbaum that the reason she did so was that he refused to remain in a house that belonged to him.

"Oh, I will," she laughed, "and I know it will sting him."

"Yes, I want to play hornet for him," returned Fred, with a smile on his face. "The doctor says that if Phil keeps on improving as he has in the past few days we can move him with safety."

That day Rosenbaum called to get her answer as to whether or not she intended to remain.

"No," she said, "I'm going to move. I won't pay any more rent than I've been paying."

"I'll knock off fifty dollars a year," said he.

"No; if I stay I'll lose two of my best tenants. Mr. Fearnot and his friend both say they will not live in any house belonging to you."

The old fellow turned white with rage.

"You can keep it at one thousand dollars a year," he said.

"But I will lose them," she returned.

"You'll lose by them if you keep them. Grimes owes me three weeks' rent now."

"He doesn't owe me anything," said she, "and Mr. Fearnot is able to pay for both and is doing so, and what is more, pays in advance."

"Oh, they are both boys, and not responsible in law for anything."

"All the same," she returned very firmly, "I would take Mr. Fearnot's word in preference to your bond."

"Does he own any property?" Rosenbaum asked.

"I don't know that he does, but he's a gentleman who never says anything that he can't back up with his money."

"You don't know anything about him, madam."

"I beg your pardon. The Rev. Dr. Blank knows his family in New York, and he told me all I wish to know about him, so you will kindly oblige me by leaving the house and not coming back until I move out."

"It is my property, madam," he blurted out.

"Yes; but it's in my possession till the first of the month."

"Well, if you are not going to keep it I wish to put it in shape for another tenant."

"You'll have ample time to do that after I get out."

"You're trying to make me lose a month's rent, madam."

"Oh, no; I'm simply trying to avoid being annoyed by you."

Just then Fred came down the stairs to leave the house for a few minutes, to go to a drug store, and seeing Rosenbaum in the hallway talking to the landlady, made a very profound bow to him. Rosenbaum glared at him through his glasses, but failed to return his recognition. Fred was about to pass out of the door when the landlady called to him:

"Mr. Fearnot, wait a moment, please. I wish to see you after Mr. Rosenbaum leaves."

Fred understood in a moment that she was asking him for protection.

"Certainly, madam," he replied pleasantly, stepping back into the hall, where he stood with an amused smile on his face, very much to the annoyance of the old fellow.

"So I am indebted to you, young man, for Mrs. Ramsey's moving, am I?" Rosenbaum said to him.

"Really I don't know, sir. I simply informed her that I would not live in a house owned by you, and if that is why she is going to move, I feel highly flattered."

"It's just that and nothing else," said the landlady. "I don't wish to lose such a profitable boarder as you are, Mr. Fearnot."

"Then I must be something of an expense to you, Mr. Rosenbaum," smiled Fred. "If I can add to it in any way, I shall be pleased to do so."

"You can't be an expense to me, but Mrs. Ramsey will learn the same lesson that I have if you stay in her house a while longer," returned Rosenbaum.

"What lesson have you learned from me? Do I owe you anything? Did I ever owe you anything? Was I ever a tenant of yours?"

"No, but your friend owes me, and he is a dead beat and so are you; a class of young fellows who go about sponging on lodging houses and landladies."

The two daughters of the landlady appeared at that moment and heard what he said. Fred simply smiled and said:

"That's tough. I never was called a dead beat before in my life by any one, man or woman."

"Well, I call you one; a low down dead beat," repeated Rosenbaum, who believed that the presence of the ladies would protect him from violence at Fred's hands.

"I hope you will remember his language, ladies," Fred remarked, turning to Mrs. Ramsey and her two daughters, "as I intend to make him pay for it in a suit for slander. Do you wish him to leave the house, Mrs. Ramsey?"

"Yes, and to stay away till after we move."

"Very well. Get out now, old man, and if you come back here again I'll horsewhip you," and he held the door open for him. He went out without saying another word.

"Oh, my! Are you really going to sue him for slander?" the elder daughter asked Fred.

"Yes. The only way to punish him is through his pocketbook."

"He ought to be punished in some way for talking that way about respectable people."

"Yes; and when Phil gets on his feet again I'll have him sue him too. The doctor heard him call the poor fellow no end of hard names."

"Do you think you can make him pay anything?"

"That is hard to say. One never knows how a jury will decide a case. But I'll worry him some, anyway."

Nothing that Fred had done touched Rosenbaum so much as the moving of Mrs. Ramsey from the house where she had lived ten years. He never thought of his trouble with Fearnot and Grimes when he made the purchase. It was a bargain, as he held a mortgage on the house for seven thousand dollars, and had to pay but five thousand dollars to own it. The fact that a good tenant was living in it influenced him not a little in the matter, and he calculated that she would stand a raise of one hundred dollars a year rather than move out.

But when she gave Fearnot the credit of ruining his plans in the matter his rage was of the savage kind, and he resolved to have revenge even though it cost him something. He knew how difficult it was to get a good tenant who could pay regularly, and apprehended that the house might remain vacant for months, which meant a loss of nearly ninety dollars a month in rent. No wonder he was in a rage.

He was too miserly, though, to pay for legal advice as to how he should proceed in his pursuit of revenge, so he talked with his burly janitor about it, who held a grudge also.

"I'm waiting for a chance to get even with him myself," said the janitor, "and when I get it, I'll remember you too."

"But can't you get him into a trap of some sort that will lock him up in jail a while?" Rosenbaum asked.

"I don't know how I can, sir. He's a mighty slick young fellow, and isn't easy to catch."

"Can't you have him arrested for drawing a pistol on you?"

"He didn't draw it, sir. He just put his hand in his pocket and said he'd drop us both if we went any nearer to him."

"Well, that shows he carries one. Have him arrested and let the police find it on him."

"The court would do nothing but fine him, and he wouldn't mind that at all. Guess he's got plenty of money."

"I don't know where he gets it. He doesn't work any that I can hear of," said the old man.

"I hear that his father is rich, sir."

"That may be, but I don't believe that his father is giving him money to throw away as he does."

"All fathers are not alike," remarked the janitor. "Some do let their sons have all they want, and it's bad for them, too."

"Of course it is. He'll bankrupt his father if he lives a few years longer. He's paying all the expenses of that young dead beat friend of his, besides his own, and doesn't earn a dollar himself."

The old man little dreamed of Fred's resources; that his father frequently employed him in transacting business for him in different parts of the country, which saved him many hundreds of dollars which he would have been compelled to pay if he hired lawyers to attend to it, and in every

instance Fred, under explicit instructions, always did the business to his complete satisfaction.

Another week passed, during which Phil had improved enough to warrant his being moved into the new boarding house which Mrs. Ramsey had taken, and the empty building which Rosenbaum had purchased remained on his hands. A placard, "To Let," was tacked conspicuously on the door, and another placed in one of the front windows, yet no applicant for it appeared; hence day by day the owner's wrath increased.

In the meantime the suit for the dressmaker's bill came to trial, and Fred, Rosenbaum and the seamstress appeared in the justice court, and just before the case was called Dr. Forbes appeared.

Fred told his story to the justice as to how he came into possession of the account; that he had bought it from the poor seamstress simply because she needed the money. The seamstress then, under oath, stated that the account was correct, and called over each item in it. Rosenbaum swore that he had paid the account by giving her another one against a former tenant of his, and that she accepted it.

"Madam," said the justice, turning to the seamstress, "did you accept that account against Grimes in payment for your bill?"

"No, judge, I did not; for I didn't know Mr. Grimes—had never seen him, nor have I ever seen him till this day; but I went to the house where he was boarding to see if he would pay the bill, and was told by both the landlady, Mrs. Ramsey, and Mr. Fearnot, who was Mr. Grimes' friend, that the young man was sick in bed and had no money. When Mr. Fearnot saw me so much distressed about it he said he would buy my account against Mr. Rosenbaum and see if he couldn't force him to pay it, so I sold it to him, then and there."

Rosenbaum then solemnly swore that she had accepted the account in exchange for what he owed her.

"Do you say that under oath, Mr. Rosenbaum?" Fred asked him.

"Yes."

"And so you considered that you had paid her with Grimes' account?"

"Yes, of course."

"Dr. Forbes," said Fred, turning to the physician, "will you take the stand and be sworn?"

"Certainly," replied the doctor, and after taking the oath he stated that Rosenbaum called on him in his office and offered to sell him the account against Grimes, some two or three days after the seamstress refused to accept it, and that a patient of his was in the office at the time who heard him. He added that Grimes was his patient, whom he visited daily, and he presumed that was why Rosenbaum had come to him with the account.

The justice looked over his glasses at Rosenbaum and remarked that if the doctor's statement was true he had committed perjury in a court of law.

"My statement is true, your honor," said the doctor, "and the other witness is present here to corroborate it."

"No corroboration is necessary," returned the justice. "I decide in favor of the plaintiff, with costs, and will report

the case of perjury to the district attorney, as it is not a case for me to take cognizance of."

Rosenbaum turned white as a sheet, and said not a word other than to ask what the costs were, and on being told, paid it on the spot and also the judgment. The judge handed the money over to Fred, who passed it to the seamstress with the remark:

"It is yours, madam. I make you a present of it."

"Thank you," she said as she took the money. "You are more than kind."

"I don't see how one can be otherwise to a poor woman who has to work for her living."

Out on the street the doctor remarked to Fred:

"This thing is going to cost Rosenbaum very dearly."

"Yes," returned Fred, "it will be a miracle if he escapes a term in State prison, and it has all grown out of his brutality to a poor boy who owed him six dollars."

"Yes; he has overreached himself. I am astonished at his conduct. He should have known better."

"Doctor, he is densely ignorant. He knows how to make and keep money, and that is about the extent of his knowledge."

"I believe you," returned the doctor. "Up to to-day I had been amused, but now it's become serious. I hardly think yet that he realizes the position he has placed himself in."

"Oh, he'll realize it pretty soon," remarked Fred, "for he'll probably consult a lawyer, who will open his eyes for him as well as his pocketbook."

Fred was right, for within an hour after leaving the justice court Rosenbaum called on an old lawyer who had always transacted his legal business for him; but he told the story in such a way as to cause the lawyer to think he had not really made himself liable to any prosecution. He said, however, he would look into the matter, which he did, by calling on the justice before whom the case was tried. The latter told him the facts in the case, and added:

"It was the clearest case of perjury I ever saw in my life."

The next day the old lawyer sent for Rosenbaum, and told him that if the matter could not be settled in some way nothing short of a miracle could save him from being placed behind prison bars.

"How can it be settled?" Rosenbaum asked. "I had clearly forgotten all about going to see the doctor, and really didn't mean to swear to what I did. I thought the matter was settled, and that the justice would so decide."

"I hardly know how it can be settled," returned the old lawyer, "unless the district attorney can be convinced that you did not intend to swear falsely, and that, I fear, will be a difficult thing to do, for the doctor and the gentleman who was in the office with him are reputable citizens. It is always best to pay these little debts, but you have been too hard on your tenants; it would have been far better to lose the six dollars out of which all this trouble has come, instead of trying to palm it off, or push the debt off on to a poor seamstress. It is possible that if young Fearnot and the doctor can be persuaded to let the matter drop the district attorney might not take any cognizance of it."

"I can't do anything with that young man," said Rosenbaum, "for he is very angry with me, and once laid violent

hands on me. He is as quick to fight as a bee is to sting. He has thrashed my janitor and a bill collector, either of whom ought to have whipped him with one hand. You must see him for me and settle it."

"It may cost you a good deal," suggested the old lawyer.

"Yes, yes," groaned the old villain, "but it would cost me more if it comes to trial."

"Give me the young man's address."

Rosenbaum gave him Fred's address, and the old lawyer wrote a polite note to him, requesting him to call at his office at his earliest convenience, as he wished to talk with him about his trouble with Rosenbaum, who was a client of his.

"By George!" laughed Fred, when he received the note. "I've got him on the run, and if I don't have some fun with him I will think I have lost my cunning. If he wants me to stop where the matter now stands he'll have to pay dearly for it."

The next morning after receiving the note Fred called at the office of the old lawyer, whom he found to be a very pleasant old gentleman, and by way of introducing himself simply handed the note back to him.

"Ah! Are you Mr. Fearnot?" asked the old lawyer.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I must express my surprise, for you are a great deal younger, at least in appearance, than I had any idea of."

"Yes," laughed Fred, "but I'm growing older every day, both in years and experience, which is more than can be said of your client, I must say."

"Yes," replied the old gentleman, "there are some things which seem to be very hard for him to learn. So far you have taught him a very severe lesson, and naturally it's a pretty hard one for him to take."

"I suppose so. He's about the hardest case I ever ran up against. I never sought any trouble with him, and what trouble he is in now he brought on himself."

"Yes, yes, I'm well aware of that, but I can assure you that it was a lesson that will bear fruit, for he is now trembling in his shoes and is extremely anxious to come to terms with you."

"Oh, I don't owe him anything, except a grudge. He owes me nothing except an apology, which isn't worth having, simply because he would make it on a basis of what it was worth to him."

"I see you've got him down pretty fine," remarked the lawyer. "He thinks more of money than of anything else, hence his punishment is exactly in proportion of the amount he is forced to pay. He has left the matter in my hands to find out from you what you will drop the matter for and let it end where it is."

On hearing that, Fred looked at the old lawyer, whose face was as calm as that of an old Quaker and extremely amiable in expression. For all that he saw the trap that was being spread for him. He had a good idea of law in a general sense, from seeing and hearing so much about it in his father's office. He knew well that to accept any consideration in a case of that kind would be compounding a felony, which would make himself liable both to a fine and imprisonment. He made up his mind quickly, however, to

see how far the old lawyer would go in that direction, so he asked:

"What is Mr. Rosenbaum willing to pay to settle the matter?"

"Anything within the bounds of reason," replied the old gentleman.

"Well, in view of the fact that I would make myself liable to the charge of compounding a felony, what sum do you think would be reasonable?"

CHAPTER VIII.

"IN THE LION'S MOUTH."

The old lawyer looked Fred straight in the face for nearly a minute without making any answer to his query, and as Fred returned his gaze a faint smile played about his mouth.

"Well, what do you think about it?" he asked.

"Think about what?" the old gentleman asked.

"Why, about my compounding a felony. Would you advise me to do it?"

"Certainly not," he replied, with a shake of his head.

"Very well, then, suppose you suggest some other mode of settling it, and get rid of the idea that I am a youth who doesn't know a few things."

"I beg your pardon," returned the old gentleman. "I never once entertained such an idea."

"I am a little sceptical about that," laughed Fred, "for you committed yourself very clearly, and sought to disarm me by agreeing that your client was a pretty hard case. Now, if you have any suggestions to make as to how the matter can be settled legally, and in conformity with what is right, I am ready to listen to it."

Never before in his life was the old lawyer so completely upset. He looked at Fred first through his glasses and then over them, finally remarking:

"You are a very bright young man."

"Oh, come, now!" laughed Fred. "None of that. Flattery won't go in a case of this kind. I don't mind telling you that I have another case against Mr. Rosenbaum in which I am going to sue him for ten thousand dollars for slander. I never owed him a cent in my life, nor do I owe any one on earth a single penny; yet, in the presence of three reputable witnesses, he denounced me as a dead beat, and even worse."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the old lawyer.

"Yes, on two different occasions, and before other witnesses, all of whom are respectable citizens."

"Well, I hadn't heard of that. Have you begun the suit?"

"Not yet, but I've engaged my lawyer."

"Well, that is another matter. Let's see if we can't settle this perjury business first, and then take up the other."

"All right," said Fred. "How do you propose to settle it?"

"Well, there is no legal way of doing it except by you and your friend letting the matter drop."

"Yes, I can understand that. But why should we? Is your client worthy of that consideration at our hands?"

That was a poser. The old lawyer could not answer the query affirmatively, and Fred knew it.

"Well, we'll look at it this way," said the lawyer. "He is an old man, and——"

"Oh, stop right there," said Fred. "Don't begin on that line. His age, respectability, or wealth, has nothing to do with it. You know just what he is, and so do I. You must place it on other grounds than that."

"Well, how would an humble apology from him do?"

"Well," laughed Fred, "what would he make the apology for? From a sense of having wronged me, or for the purpose of saving himself from prosecution? If the former, it would be all right. If he apologizes simply because it would save him from State prison, it won't go. Now, don't you think, sir, that he really ought to be prosecuted and sent up for a term of years?"

"Oh, come, now; you don't expect me to answer such a question as that?" said the old gentleman.

"No, of course not; but all the same you will permit me to entertain the idea that personally you think as I do about it."

"Well, see here, Mr. Fearnot. In consideration of the fact that you've got him in your power, and his authorizing me to settle the matter for him shows that he is considerably frightened, and to that extent severely punished, is it not quite lesson enough for him? It was a small matter in which only six dollars were involved, which he finally had to pay, in a little justice court matter, and after all no one has been damaged except himself."

"Well, that is some consideration," remarked Fred, "but hardly quite satisfactory to me. You know what human nature is, and when an old man worth a quarter of a million dollars goes around in the neighborhood where a youth is living for the time being, calls him a dead beat, prize fighter, burglar, and all that sort of thing, can you blame the youth for giving him a taste of the law?"

"I can't really say that I can, but you know that to err is human, to forgive divine."

"Very true; but there's nothing divine about me, nor do I intend to bring any divinity into the matter. It's purely human and personal. I confess to a desire to show Mr. Rosenbaum what an eighteen-year-old boy can do toward holding up his end of the row. I showed him the first day I met him what I could do from a physical standpoint, by firing him out of the room of my sick friend. I went into the police court and gave him a roasting before the judge that would have made any decent man go out and hang himself with shame; but there is only one vulnerable spot about him, and that is his pocketbook. The police justice agreed with me that I had served him right when I fired him and his janitor out of the room, and now I will say to you that I am not the one to extend any mercy to a man of that kind. I don't know that I am vindictive. I have often done wrong, and the moment I became convinced of it I apologized and made all the amends that were due. Could I be convinced that Mr. Rosenbaum had a single redeeming trait in a matter of humanity, I would show him

some consideration; but I know him to be just what he is—perhaps the meanest man in the whole city of Philadelphia. There is only one way that he can be saved from punishment for perjury, and that is to convince the district attorney that a case can't be made out against him, and that, I believe, can hardly be done."

"You are very severe," remarked the old lawyer.

"Really, now, do you think I am as severe as he is?"

"Well, Mr. Fearnot, let me ask you to think over this matter a few days before taking any step, and let me see you again."

"All right," returned Fred. "I frankly admit that it's a pleasure to me to teach your client this lesson, and that I would drop it right here if I thought it would have a tendency to make a better man of him. I am not a reformer and haven't set out to convert him, but am simply an all-round boy, full of all the instincts of what I conceive to be a gentleman. I don't believe that I ever, knowingly, did a mean thing in my life. I stand always ready to defend the weak and lend a helping hand to one in need. I am quick and passionate, ready to resent an insult or an injury, and would fight for a friend as quick as I would for myself. This man, Rosenbaum, treated a poor boy, who was a friend of mine, in a way that I regarded as extremely brutal, and he has followed it up, has abused me because, in paying my friend's expenses where he is now lying ill, including his doctor's bill and medicine, I didn't include the six dollars that he owed him. I did intend to pay it, but when he appeared and demanded it in such a brutal way I refused to pay it and had him moved to another house. You can tell him all these things at your leisure, and you may repeat to him what I once said to him myself, that I would pay him the six dollars my friend owes him when he learns how to be a gentleman, and the offer stands good yet," and with that Fred made his bow and left the lawyer's office.

The next day Rosenbaum received notice from the lawyer whom Fred had employed that he had begun suit against him for ten thousand dollars damages for defamation of character. On receiving that notice Rosenbaum hastened to see his lawyer again.

"Well, Rosenbaum," said the old lawyer, "for a man of your age you have less sense than any one I ever did business for. A man is as much responsible and as liable in damages for what he says as for what he does. This young man, Fearnot, can go into court and show a clean character. He is the son of one of the ablest lawyers in New York City, and his witnesses are respectable people, while on the other hand it is a very hard matter for you to find one who can speak a good word for you, because you have been harsh in the treatment of your tenants, who have quietly submitted to anything you chose to say to them or about them. Now, my advice to you is not to fight this case, but to settle it out of court. That can be settled very easily, but young Fearnot is shrewd enough not to make himself liable to compounding a felony by accepting any consideration for refusing to appear against you in the perjury matter. He told me that the only punishment that could be inflicted upon you that would be a punishment would be through your purse, and hence, if you can let him have the satis-

faction of making you pay damages for defamation of character I think he could be persuaded to regard that as punishment enough and let the perjury matter drop. So it is a choice between settling it that way or taking the chances of going to State prison in the other. That is my advice to you. There will be more money in it for me to defend both suits for you, but I know full well that it will be much worse for you if you let either case go to trial."

Rosenbaum was thoroughly alarmed, and told his lawyer to settle the slander case at once.

"That's easier said than done," replied the lawyer.

"Why, didn't you say it could be settled?"

"Oh, yes. The trouble is with you, not with him. You probably have the impression that he would be satisfied with fifty or a hundred dollars, whereas I believe that it will take anywhere between one thousand and five thousand dollars to settle it."

"What!" gasped Rosenbaum. "I'd see him hanged first!"

"Oh, there is no danger of his being hanged; it's you who are in danger. If it costs you one, two, three or five thousand dollars to get out of this scrape it may be very cheap for you in the end. I will see him for you, though, and cut him down to the lowest figure possible, and then let you know."

"Get him to come here and let me see him," suggested Rosenbaum.

"Very well, but let me say to you that you will only make the matter worse, because he believes you to be nothing but a brute in human shape, and you have been in the habit all your life of being brusque and rude to nearly every one you had dealings with, which is something that he is very quick to resent. If you wish, however, I'll have you meet him, but you'd better wait until I see him again. When a man gets his hand in a lion's mouth, instead of trying to pull loose by main force he should pat the lion on the head and persuade him to let him go."

"Yes, but he isn't a lion," retorted Rosenbaum.

"There's where you are mistaken. He's got you where you are as much in his power as the lion would have you were your hand in his mouth. He is no fool; on the contrary, he is a bright, intellectual and gentlemanly young fellow, and withal a fighter from 'way back. He can take care of himself as well as any one that I know of. I tried myself to get him into a trap for the purpose of forcing him to let up on you, but he saw through it instantly and actually laughed at me. I have a great deal of respect for him, and if he went into court and had the story told of how he has befriended a sick, penniless youth, whom you had abused because he couldn't pay you the paltry sum of six dollars, the jury would promptly give him every penny of the ten thousand dollars damages he claims against you. Now go home and think that over and wait till I send for you."

Rosenbaum left the office of his lawyer and returned home, inwardly groaning all the way, and the suspense he suffered that night was perhaps more painful to him than anything he had endured in the whole course of his life. Repeatedly he muttered to himself:

"I'll kill him before I'll pay him any such sum! He is trying to rob me. He is no better than his friend who

wouldn't pay his debt. I'm willing to pay anything reasonable, but one—two—three—five thousand dollars! No! I'll kill him first! It's an outrage for a boy like him to put on airs that way just because he has learned how to knock people over!"

That evening the old lawyer called at the boarding house and asked for Fred, and in the parlor they talked the matter of the damage suit over for a good while. He informed Fred that Rosenbaum had authorized him to settle the suit outside of court, which could be done legally.

"Oh, yes," said Fred; "no trouble about that. How much do you think would be ample punishment for your client?"

"Oh, it is for you to name your figures."

"Very well, then," said Fred. "I can come pretty near getting a verdict for the whole amount claimed before any jury in this city. He could carry it up to a higher court, and as I am quite young I can fight it out to the bitter end, throwing all the cost on him every time."

"Well, but you must remember," said the lawyer, "that the full amount of such claims are rarely given by a jury."

"Yes; nine out of ten people would ask damages to the amount of fifty thousand dollars. I think I've been rather moderate in my claim, and would be willing to wager a thousand that I could get a verdict to the full amount. I am willing, however, under the circumstances, to cut it down one-half."

"Oh, that's too much, that's too much," said the lawyer, shaking his head. "You don't need it, and really it would be a hard matter to prove that you've been damaged to the extent of a dollar."

"But I could make it cost him more than five thousand dollars by following the case as far up as he might appeal it. I could make the cost go to half that amount. Now I've given you my figures; what do you offer?"

"One thousand dollars," said the lawyer.

"Oh, that's absurd!" returned Fred. "Now, I'll tell you what I'll do, sir; I'll reduce it to three thousand dollars, or fight it to the bitter end, rather than come down the value of a postage stamp."

"Make it two thousand, and I think it can be settled at that."

"I won't reduce it two cents farther. I pledge you my word of honor, which I value at more than a hundred thousand dollars, that he will pay three thousand dollars or take the consequences of a fight in the court for ten years if necessary."

"Well, I will see him and let you know," remarked the lawyer, rising to his feet.

"Very well, then, that ends the business so far. Now let me ask you, are you fond of music?"

"Very fond of it," was the reply.

"Then keep your seat, please, and I'll call in the Misses Ramsey, and we'll sing and play for you a while," and with that Fred went in search of the landlady's two daughters, who came into the parlor, were introduced, and for nearly an hour played to Fred's singing, with which the old gentleman was pleased beyond expression, for he thanked all three in a manner that told plainly how well he had been entertained.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW FRED FOUND HIMSELF IN A TIGHT PLACE.

As was to have been expected, when Rosenbaum's lawyer submitted Fred's terms upon which he would settle his damage suit there was an explosion. The irascible old landlord swore roundly that he wouldn't pay it.

"Yes, you will," said the lawyer, "if you take my advice. I spent more than an hour with young Fearnot last night, and found it utterly impossible to make him reduce his claim a penny less than that. At first he demanded five thousand dollars. I tried to get him down to one thousand, but he stubbornly refused to take less than three thousand."

"I'll fight it in court first," said the old fellow.

"Very well; if you do, it will cost you in the end all that he claims, and besides that he will push the perjury suit against you, which will land you in State prison as sure as the sun rises and sets. If, however, you settle this suit, I am satisfied that he will drop the other."

"Did he say so?" Rosenbaum asked.

"No, of course not. You don't suppose he is going to make himself liable to imprisonment, do you?"

"I won't pay it!" blurted out Rosenbaum. "I will see him myself."

"Very well; but let me tell you that you'll only injure your prospects by doing so, for it will result in a quarrel, which will end in his withdrawing his offer to take three thousand dollars and push both suits against you."

"I can buy off the other witnesses for less money," retorted Rosenbaum.

"Nonsense! You can't buy the doctor nor the justice, and in attempting to do so you make yourself liable to another case against you."

The old fellow had expected that it might cost him one, two, or possibly three hundred dollars to settle the matter, but three thousand dollars was an appalling sum to him. His love for money was so great that it was his ruling passion. He went out from his lawyer's office fully determined that rather than pay such a sum he would resort to desperate methods to put Fearnot out of the way. His first step was to see Dr. Forbes and talk the matter over with him.

The doctor was in his office when he called on him.

"Doctor," said he, "that young villain offers to settle that damage suit for three thousand dollars and has refused to take any less sum. My lawyer can do nothing with him."

"Well, Mr. Rosenbaum," the doctor replied, "he has such a sure thing of it that I am really surprised that he offered to compromise for such a small amount. He has a clear case against you, and when he gets a judgment he can collect it. He doesn't care two cents for the money, but does wish to punish you for the way you have treated him and his sick friend."

"Well, I want you to see if you can't persuade him to take less, and I will pay you a hundred dollars if you succeed in doing so."

The doctor shook his head and declined to have anything to do with it.

"I'll give you one hundred and fifty dollars," said Rosenbaum.

"I wouldn't touch it for five hundred dollars. You are amply able to pay it, and I dare say your lawyer has advised you to do so."

"I won't do it!" said the old fellow, with an obstinate shake of his head.

"Are you going to let it go to trial?" the doctor asked.

"Yes, I'll fight it for ten years."

The doctor laughed, and remarked:

"I believe Fearnot would prefer to have you fight it, because he enjoys a thing of that kind. You seem to forget the other case, and I am astonished at a man of your age taking such a risk."

"Well, he's running a risk, too," returned Rosenbaum, with a significant shake of his head.

"Well, I don't know what risk he is running."

"Oh, there are some things that you don't know yet."

"Very true, but there are a few things that I do know.

One is that in the end you'll have to pay all that he claims in the damage suit, and the other that you'll go to State prison for perjury. You have a great deal of money, and it will take half your fortune to save you. I'm sorry that I'm mixed up with it in any way."

"Why need you be mixed up with it?" Rosenbaum asked.

"Why should you appear as a witness against me?"

"How can I get out of it?"

"Why, by staying away from court."

"And be arrested for failing to respond when summoned by the court? Ruin my own reputation and my practice? Not for ten thousand dollars! Why don't you go and pay the three thousand dollars and drop the matter? If you do so, I promise to use all the influence I have with Fearnot to persuade him to drop the other case."

Rosenbaum went away, and that evening called on Fred at his boarding house, and was shown into the parlor by the girl who answered his ring of the door bell. Fred met him with a bland smile, but refused to shake hands with him, saying:

"Take a seat, Mr. Rosenbaum, and tell me to what I am indebted for the honor of this call."

"I want to see you about that damage suit," said the old fellow, taking his seat in a rather crestfallen way.

"I thought you had left that with your lawyer," remarked Fred.

"So I did, but he says that you insist on three thousand dollars, and I won't pay so much."

"Very well; I'm really glad to hear that. I agreed to take that because your lawyer, who is a nice old gentleman, begged so hard for me to come down from what I claimed; but as you have refused, I withdraw the offer, and will insist on five thousand dollars or let it go to trial."

"Why, how have I damaged you five thousand dollars?"

"Oh, well, we won't discuss that. You are utterly unable to comprehend the value of a reputation, for with you a dollar is a standard of measurement. It is different with gentlemen."

"Well, if I pay three thousand dollars will you agree to let the other matter drop?"

"No. My offer to take three thousand dollars is with-

drawn, since you refused to pay it, and I presume your lawyer has told you that if I agreed to withdraw the other suit for any consideration I make myself liable to arrest and imprisonment. I hope you will not say anything more to me about it, but leave the house at once and not call on me again."

"Well, won't you let me talk to you about it?"

"Not another word," and Fred rose to his feet as a sign that the interview was at an end. The old fellow insisted upon discussing it further, when Fred turned on him with:

"Now, Mr. Rosenbaum, if you don't quietly walk out of this house I'll open the door and throw you out head foremost," and with that he left the parlor and opened the street door. The old man passed out without uttering a word, and Fred closed the door behind him.

"What did he want, Fred?" Phil asked, when he returned up stairs.

"He simply wanted to talk the matter over and say that he wouldn't pay the three thousand dollars. I told him I was glad to hear it, and would withdraw the offer to settle at that figure. Then I ordered him out and he went. He'll have to pay five thousand dollars now, or take the chances before a jury."

The next day the old man was arrested in the damage suit and was forced to give bail to avoid being locked up. That frightened him to such an extent that he went to his lawyer and gave his check for three thousand dollars with which to settle the matter. The lawyer sent for Fred and offered him the check.

"I don't want it," said Fred, "and won't take it. He refused to pay it, and I withdrew the offer and told him that I would take nothing less than five thousand dollars or go to trial."

"I would advise you to take it, Mr. Fearnot," said the old lawyer.

"Oh, you are not my legal adviser," laughed Fred. "I'm not after his money. I don't want it! I'm after him. You can return the check to him and tell him to add two thousand dollars more to it and I'll take it."

"Say, Fearnot, I'll be candid with you and say that I advised him to pay the three thousand dollars, but he refused and said he would see you himself. I told him not to do so, as it would only make the matter worse for him. Now, in all conscience, this three thousand dollars is enough, and were it not for the other case I would advise him against paying this."

"That shows you have a pretty level head," remarked Fred, with a smile. "I'll be frank with you and say that I don't intend to keep a dollar of any money that I force him to pay, for I don't want it. I intend to divide it up between my sick friend and that poor seamstress, both of who he has treated very shabbily, to say the least. I admit that I'm having a good deal of fun out of it, and have the ambition to force him to remember as long as he lives that the worst thing he ever ran up against was an eighteen-year-old boy."

"He is thoroughly convinced of that fact already."

"Yes, I'm beginning to think so myself. I'm engaged in a good work and wish to carry it through. I told him

last night that I would now make the demand for five thousand dollars simply because he had refused to accept my offer. Now, for your sake, I'll let him off with four thousand dollars. If he refuses to pay that you can add another thousand to it or go to trial. I'm doing all this without consultation with my lawyer. If he agrees to pay the four thousand dollars I will send my legal adviser to you and let him close it up."

"You are very severe," remarked the old lawyer.

"Yes, I mean to be, simply because he is himself a severe man, who is very much in need of a severe lesson."

"Well, let the matter stand until I see him again."

"All right," returned Fred, "but since proceedings have been commenced and he has been arrested and has given bail, the settlement must first be submitted to the judge for approval."

"Oh, yes, I understand that."

"Well, I merely mentioned it in order that you might know that I understand it, too."

Fred left the old lawyer's office and returned to his boarding house in time for dinner, and in the afternoon called on his own lawyer to report to him what had taken place since he last saw him. The lawyer suggested that he take the three thousand dollars and drop the matter.

"Oh, no; don't worry about your fee. I don't intend to yield a single thing to the old villain, and the harder he begs for concession, the more inexorable I shall be in my demand."

"Very well," returned the other; "you've got a grip on him, and he may finally come to terms."

Fred returned home quite late in the afternoon, and as Phil was so much improved as to be able to sit up in a rocking chair, decided to go to the theatre that evening, and invited Miss Ramsey to accompany him. It turned out, though, that she had an engagement for that evening which could not be broken, very much to her regret. Her sister also was engaged, so he went alone. It was near midnight when he started to return, and when within four blocks of his home he was seized from behind by a pair of strong arms, and a thick, heavy bag pulled down over his head and drawn so tightly around his neck as to almost suffocate him. He could only use his feet in resisting, but soon found that he was in the hands of two very strong men, one of whom seized his ankle, and a few moments later he felt himself being borne down a flight of stairs. He still used every muscle to resist, but felt his strength leaving him on account of the choking caused by the bag being drawn so tightly about his throat. He was carried down a second flight of stairs, at the bottom of which he ceased to resist, but struggled only to get breath. He was laid on the floor with a heavy knee pressed upon his chest, while his pockets were rifled and everything taken from him, including his pocket knife and revolver. Then his hands and feet were bound, after which the bag was removed, and he found himself in what looked like a cellar room, lighted by a single candle.

Two stalwart men with masks on their faces that reached down below their chins stood over him.

"Well, what do you want?" he asked of the one on his right.

"We wanted you!" was the reply in a gruff voice.

"Well, you've got me; now what are you going to do?"

"Well, we are going to do a little business with you."

"Well, you've begun it in rather a rough way," he remarked.

"Yes, we had to. In our line of business we have to work that way."

"Well, what is your business?" he asked.

"It is nothing more nor less than a ransom for your life."

"Oh, that's it, eh? You've got all I have, haven't you?"

"We've got all we found on you, which is a watch, about one hundred and thirty dollars in cash, and a yellow diamond stud."

"Well, that's all I have. What's the use of asking for it when you've already got it?"

"Well, I guess you've got more besides that."

"Very true, but neither of us can get at it."

"Well, we'll see about that. We happen to know how things are with you, for we've been watching you for some time. I know that your governor has got plenty of money, and also that old Rosenbaum will come down with a few thousand if you give us an order on him for it."

"I guess you can't get a cent out of him," remarked Fred.

"We'll take the chances on that. You give us an order on him for three thousand dollars, and when he pays it we'll let you go."

"But what if he doesn't pay it?"

"Oh, we happen to know that you've got him where he's perfectly willing to pay it. We understand all about your suit with him, and that he is willing to pay that amount in settlement."

"Well, why didn't you wait till I got the money, and then go for me?"

"Because we know that he would have paid you with a check, which you would have deposited in the bank, where we couldn't get at it. If you give us an order on him we'll get the money, for we don't want any check."

"But how do I know you will release me even then?"

"You've got to take our word for that, for we've got you where you've got him."

"Well, what if I refuse to give the order?"

The mask looked at him for nearly a minute without making any reply, and then quietly drew an ugly-looking knife from the inside of his coat, and made a motion with it across his own throat, which was extremely significant.

"Yes, I understand," replied Fred; "but it is now midnight. How are you going to see him?"

"We can't see him until to-morrow morning; and we'll stay here with you until then."

"Well, we'll have plenty of time to think about it."

"Yes, but we are not going to stop to do any thinking. You must write the order at once, or we'll wind up the business at very short order and leave you here for the rats to feed on."

Fred lay there for fully ten minutes without uttering a word, but did some of the hardest thinking of his life. He was satisfied in his mind that it was Rosenbaum's work. He reasoned that his death would not save Rosenbaum from prosecution in the case for perjury, but would perhaps

hasten it. He believed that the villains would take his order to Rosenbaum, who would only pay them for their services and take the order as a receipt for the full three thousand dollars.

"They've got me where I can't help myself," thought he, "and I may as well give the order and, if I get loose in any way, repudiate it, and push both suits against him."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" asked the gruff voice on his right.

"I'll give the order," he replied, "but I first want to know how I'll be treated after I've done so."

"We'll keep you here till my partner gets the money, then we'll go away, leaving you lying just where you are; you can yell for help till somebody comes to you. Five minutes will be all we want in which to make our escape."

"All right, then; give me a pen, ink and paper, and I'll write it."

"We've got that on hand," said the man, looking over at his partner, who drew from his pocket a sheet of paper, a pen and a small bottle of ink, which he deposited on a little table near by while the other untied Fred's hands and feet. The latter arose, sat down on a chair by the table to write, when the man with the gruff voice said:

"Here, copy this and it will be all right," and he laid a sheet of paper on the table on which was scrawled:

"Received of Mr. G. Rosenbaum the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) in settlement of my claim against him in a suit for defamation of character, and in consideration of same, promise not to proceed against him for alleged perjury.

FRED FEARNOT."

CHAPTER X.

"I'M SHOT! I'M KILLED!"—HOW FRED TURNED THE TABLES AND ESCAPED WITH HIS LIFE.

When Fred read over the copy that had been laid before him he looked up at the man with the gruff voice and asked:

"Why make me liable to prosecution by settling the other case?"

"We do that as a guarantee that you won't go back on the order for the money."

"What is it to you whether I do or not after you get the money?"

"Nothing, except that you won't put the police after us, nor say anything about it, lest you get yourself into trouble."

"Has Rosenbaum anything to do with this?" Fred asked after a pause of nearly a minute.

"Not a thing. He knows nothing about it, but we know that he is willing to pay the three thousand dollars, and that's what we are after."

"Who wrote this copy?" Fred asked.

"I did, and you had better copy it without asking any more questions," and as he spoke the fellow put his hand in his pocket and drew a revolver half way out.

"Oh, that's all right," returned Fred, taking up the pen and proceeding to make an exact copy of the scrawled lines before him. He wrote rapidly, while the two men leaned over, reading every word as his pen glided along over the paper. When he finished it, he stopped, whereupon the man said:

"That's all right. Now sign it."

Fred dipped the pen in the ink, but the next moment dropped it and made a grab at the handle of the revolver which was sticking out of the pocket of the man's trousers. He sprang to his feet and, quick as a flash of lightning, dealt him a terrific blow with it behind his ear, and he dropped as though he had been decapitated. The other fellow, who had not uttered a word during the whole time, gasped out an exclamation and dashed for the little narrow stairway that led to the floor above. Fred fired at him, and he uttered a yell as he fell against the steps, where he laid against them groaning.

Without paying any further attention to him, Fred stooped over the man whom he had knocked down, and in the other pocket found his revolver, which he transferred to his own, and then proceeded to search for his watch and pocketbook, as well as the yellow diamond stud, all of which he found.

"Now," said he, approaching the man on the steps, "the tables are turned and I am master of the situation;" and with that he snatched the mask from his face, and to his astonishment found him to be Rosenbaum himself, with his beard shaved off. He was enabled to recognize him first by the shape of his nose. Then he understood why it was that the other fellow did all the talking.

"So it is you, eh?" he said, but Rosenbaum kept groaning.

"Oh, I'm killed!"

"No, you are not," said Fred. "I know exactly where I hit you. I aimed at your leg above the knee. I could have tapped you anywhere I pleased. I only wanted to stop you."

"Oh, I'm dying!" groaned the old villain.

"I guess not," returned Fred very coolly, "but if you do go, present my compliments to old Nick, and tell him I said to let you have a warm place."

The old man sat on the steps holding his leg above the knee with both hands, groaning as though in an agony of pain. Fred left him and returned to the man lying on the floor of the cellar, and tore the mask from his face, to find him an entire stranger, whom he had never before seen, to his knowledge. He was lying as though dead, for he had received a stunning blow just back of his ear near the base of the skull.

"I may have finished him," he said, "though I didn't intend to. Had I wanted to kill him, I would have shot him instead of striking him. I've got him, though, just where I wanted him. As I told you before, old man, you're a pretty shrewd old chap, but you haven't kept pace with the progress of the age. You don't seem to understand how to do things. You've managed this little affair about as badly as everything else since I first saw you. It's your turn now to do a little writing at my dictation. I want you to take a seat at this table here and write out a full confession of this whole thing."

"No! no! no!" groaned Rosenbaum. "I can't write anything. I couldn't if it was to save my life. In God's name have mercy!"

"No, you can't expect any mercy from me. This is case No. 3, and I guess I'll manage to send you up for about twenty years behind prison bars, and all on account of just six dollars."

The old fellow groaned so much that Fred took the candle from the table and looked to see where the bullet had struck. He found him bleeding very profusely, and became apprehensive that he really might die from the loss of blood.

"Do you want a physician?" Fred asked him.

"Yes, yes."

"Well, I'll go for Dr. Forbes. If you can make your escape before I can get back, all right. I guess the other fellow is done for, so I'll take the chances of finding you both here when I return," and with that he climbed over him, ascended the little narrow stairway, taking the candle with him in order to find his way out. He found himself in the basement of a house, and knew then that he had been taken down into a sub-cellar. He ascended another flight of stairs to a door, where he found the key in the lock, opened it and made his way to the street door, which he also found locked, with the key on the inside. He set the candle on the floor, put the key on the outside in the lock, passed out, locked the door, and, taking the key with him, hastened away in the direction of Dr. Forbes' residence. There he rang the bell nearly five minutes before he received any response.

Then he heard a window raised in the second story, and the voice of the doctor called out:

"Who is it?"

"It's me, doctor—Fearnot."

"What's the matter?" the doctor asked. "Is Grimes worse?"

"No. Come down. It's another case."

"All right; I'll be down just as soon as I can dress," returned the doctor, shutting down the window.

Fred waited for him on the stoop, and when he appeared took him by the arm and in a few whispered sentences told him what had happened.

"Well, well!" gasped the doctor. "There is no fool like an old fool. Wait till I get some of my instruments, for I may have to probe for that bullet."

"All right, I'll wait for you," returned Fred.

The doctor was gone about five minutes, and when he reappeared the two hurried away to the empty building where the tragedy had occurred. Fred produced a key, unlocked the door and found himself in total darkness.

"Hello!" he said. "I left the candle burning here on the floor. Have you got a match, doctor?"

The doctor struck a match and by the light of it Fred saw that the candle had been taken away. They went forward, however, and by continually striking matches found their way to the door which led to the basement. There, on a table in the kitchen, they found the candle, and a window which looked out upon the rear yard of the premises was open.

"Here's the candle," said the doctor, picking it up and relighting it.

"I guess the fellow I knocked down has made his escape," remarked Fred. "Hold the light here, doctor, while I inspect this yard out here."

The doctor held the light, while Fred passed through the window and searched the premises, which were inclosed with a high board fence, but failed to find any one there. When he returned the doctor remarked:

"I hear the old man groaning down stairs."

"Yes; I guess the other fellow has left him to his fate."

They opened the door and descended to the sub-cellar, where they found Rosenbaum just as Fred had left him.

"What's the matter, Mr. Rosenbaum?" the doctor asked.

"Oh, I'm shot! I'm killed!"

"Well, you are the first dead man I ever heard talk. Let me see where you are hurt," and as Fred held the candle the doctor made a hasty examination and found that his trousers leg was saturated with blood and the shoe filled with it.

"You've lost a good deal of blood," he said. "The best thing to do is to get you home at once, so the wound can be attended to."

"Will I live, doctor?" the old man asked.

"Yes, if you don't die."

"But will this thing kill me?"

"I can't say yet, till I get you home, where I can take your trousers off and see what the damage is. Can you stand up on the leg?"

"I don't know." He made the attempt, and would have fallen had not the doctor caught him.

"We'll have to take him home, Fearnot," said the doctor.

"All right; we can take him between us," returned Fred.

"Now, look here," groaned Rosenbaum, "don't tell anybody how this thing happened, and I will do just what you two say I ought to do, no matter what it is."

"You should have done that before," returned Fred.

"Yes, yes; I'm an old fool. I will do whatever you say is right, only don't say anything about it to anybody. I'll say somebody shot me."

"Well, never mind about that now," said the doctor. "The first thing to do is to get you home where your wound can be dressed."

They assisted him up the stairs and out on the stoop of the house. As it was long after midnight, not a soul was in sight, and it was three blocks away to where Rosenbaum lived.

Under the instructions of the doctor, Rosenbaum placed an arm around both his neck and Fred's, and supported himself so he could hop on one foot. When about half way to his home they met a solitary policeman, who asked what the trouble was.

"This gentleman has been hurt," said the doctor.

"How did he get hurt?"

"He says somebody shot him in the leg."

"Well, that's a case for me to attend to," and he proceeded to assist in conveying the old man to his home, and rang the bell when they reached the house. Mrs. Rosenbaum came to the door in her night dress, and on seeing the officer asked:

"What is the matter?"

"Your husband has been hurt, madam, and we brought him home. Light the gas and put on a dress as quickly as you can."

It threw her almost into a panic, but she quickly followed the officer's instructions, while the others were bringing the old man in. They laid him on a lounge in the dining room. She knew the doctor, but had never seen Fred, so she never suspected the truth.

"Now tell me who shot you?" the officer asked of Rosenbaum, while the doctor was removing his trousers to examine the wound.

"I don't know. Somebody shot behind me and I fell."

"Where did it happen?"

Rosenbaum told him in front of No. 34 Myrtle street.

"Did you see the man who shot you?"

"No."

"Now, see here, officer," said the doctor, "let him alone now, until I have attended to him. Come back to-morrow and ask him all the questions you please."

The officer knew the doctor, and left the house to report the case at the police station. Fred remained with the physician until the bullet was extracted and the wound dressed, after which they went away together.

"Now, doctor," said Fred, "I can send that old villain up for fifteen or twenty years for this thing."

"Yes; but you are the only witness, as the other fellow will certainly keep out of the way; so I advise you to say nothing about it, for it would be a question of veracity between you two, and as you are not a citizen here, and he is, there is no telling how the jury would decide."

"Very true," returned Fred. "I'm inclined to think, though, that, as he has once committed perjury, no jury would believe him. Yet as I have turned the tables on him so well I won't say anything about it, but simply wait and see what he will do."

"That's the best way," said the doctor. "He will probably talk to me about it, and I will let you know just what he says."

Fred left the doctor at the door of his residence and returned to his boarding house, where he retired at about three o'clock in the morning. Of course he slept very late, but when he arose he said nothing to Phil about what had occurred, and spent a little while looking over the morning papers to see if he could find any mention of the tragedy. It had occurred at such a late hour in the night, however, that the newspapers had not been able to get hold of it; but it was in the afternoon papers, however, simply stating that Mr. Rosenbaum, a wealthy real estate owner, had been shot in the leg the night before by some unknown person, and that the police were making every effort to get at the facts in the case.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

When Fred returned from a visit down town, quite late in the afternoon of the day following the occurrences re-

lated in the previous chapter, he found the landlady and both her daughters in Phil's room, discussing with him the news they had just read in the afternoon papers, and when he entered all three sang out:

"Oh, Mr. Fearnot! Mr. Rosenbaum has been shot!"

"Yes," he replied, "I saw it in the paper."

"Who in the world do you think did it?" the landlady asked.

"Bless you, madam," he laughed, "there are perhaps a hundred people in this vicinity who would probably take great pleasure in shooting him."

"The paper says that he doesn't know who shot him."

"Yes, I read that," he replied. "If I had as many enemies as he has I'd never go out of nights."

"It's a wonder he hasn't been shot before this," said the younger of the two daughters.

"Well, it all comes in a lifetime," returned Fred. "Men generally get punished in this life for the evil they do, and it is perhaps well that it is so, as it has a much better effect in deterring others from doing wrong."

"But evil-doers are all punished in the next world," said Mrs. Ramsey, who was a great believer in future rewards and punishment.

"Yes, that's the general belief," smiled Fred; "but that sort of punishment doesn't comply with the law of the land. If evil-doers were not punished in this life, we would have no protection from them. I don't believe in making Old Nick an officer of the law to protect me from evil-doers. I prefer the law of the land, and sometimes my own good right arm."

"I see Dr. Forbes is attending him," said one of the girls, "and when he calls here again he can tell us all about it."

"Yes, I'd like to see him," assented Fred.

Naturally the ladies were very much excited over the matter, and in the evening when the doctor called to see Phil they overwhelmed him with questions. He told them that the wound was both painful and quite serious to one of his age.

He says he doesn't know who shot him," added the doctor. "It is very probable that if he did know he would do all that he could to have them punished. A policeman called at the house this morning and asked him a great many questions, but he persists in his first statement that he has no idea who shot him. Says he never saw his assailant, but did hear footsteps running away after the shot was fired, and that's all that he knows about it."

When the doctor went away Fred accompanied him, to give him a chance to talk to him privately about it; but he said he himself had had no chance to talk privately with Rosenbaum, but that he would probably on the morrow.

"Don't you think I'd better see Rosenbaum's lawyer about it, doctor?" Fred asked.

"No. Just wait until we hear from him. I'm going to charge him one thousand dollars for my services, and he'll pay it without a word of objection."

"That's right," laughed Fred; "but you'd better be careful and not render any bill."

"Oh, I'll render a bill at the regular rates. There is

no danger of the old rascal ever saying anything, for he's the worst-whipped man I ever saw in my life."

"Well, now, doctor, if he says anything to you about me tell him that I refuse to have anything to do with it save in a legitimate way. If he wants to pay me five thousand dollars to stop the suit for defamation of character I'll let my lawyer and his settle it, and have it sanctioned by the court. You can say to him, though, that you heard me say that, as he had been punished enough, I for one would take no step toward bringing about his prosecution for perjury. I'll divide the money with Phil in order to set the poor fellow on his feet again. I've stood by him through thick and thin, because once in St. Louis last year he saved me from being done up in a very bad way. I know him to be a good boy."

"Yes, he seems to be," assented the doctor.

"Oh, he is," repeated Fred.

A week later Fred received a note from Rosenbaum's lawyer to call at his office again, as he wished to see him. Fred went, and found that Rosenbaum had sent in a check for five thousand dollars for settlement of the suit for defamation of character.

"You've won your case, Fearnot," said the old lawyer, as he showed him the check.

"Oh, yes, I knew I would. I will send my lawyer to you, and when the settlement is sanctioned by the judge, that ends the matter, and you can turn it over to him for me."

The matter was settled the next day, and when the check was cashed Fred paid his lawyer five hundred dollars, which was the largest fee he had ever received in his life, for his practice was by no means extensive.

"What are you going to do about the perjury case?" his lawyer asked.

"Oh, if the district attorney proceeds I shall appear as a witness and tell what I know about it; but as the old man is down and has received a pretty severe lesson I've no desire to push him any further."

When Fred returned to his boarding house he divided the remaining four thousand five hundred dollars with Phil, saying at the same time:

"Now you can pay Rosenbaum that six dollars you owe him."

"Yes," laughed Phil. "I shall send it to him at once, with a receipt for him to sign. And now, Fred, you have placed me under a lifetime obligation to you. I really don't think I ought to take so much of this."

"That's all right. It all grew out of your little debt of six dollars, which makes it really a sort of inheritance for you. I keep what I do as a fee for the fun I've been furnishing the old man. You want to take good care of your money, Phil, for you're not entirely out of the woods yet. You won't be strong enough to go to work under two or three months. You might make some very neat presents to Mrs. Ramsey and her two daughters, for they've been very kind, although they have been paid well and promptly for everything."

"So they have, and I'll be sure to act on your suggestion. The doctor says that I can go about wherever I please, provided I take good care of myself and do not overtax my

strength; so I'll go down with you to-morrow and put this money in the savings bank."

"That's right; and just quietly take a rest for the balance of the season."

There was considerable rejoicing in the household that evening when it became known that Rosenbaum had been forced to shell out to the tune of five thousand dollars in his settlement with Fred. They were astonished, however, at his dividing the money with Phil, for it was a liberality on his part which they could scarcely understand.

"Oh, he needs it a great deal more than I do," said Fred when they mentioned it to him. "He is all alone in the world, while I am not. It will be a corner stone for him on which he can build, and I hope he will succeed in doing so. Now, what do you all say for a box at the opera to-morrow night, and a supper afterward?"

Of course no objection was made to that. Fred invited the eldest daughter and Phil the younger.

"And now, mother," laughed Fred, "I'm sorry Innes is not here to take you along. He is very fond of widows, but he has left the city with the theatrical company, and is probably doing better than ever before in his life. All the same, you must come along with us and see that we all have a good time. I'm not afraid of being watched by the mother of my girl, but I don't know how she will feel about having you around when she has a nice young man by her side."

"Oh, that's all right," laughed Miss Ramsey, "as long as she doesn't try to cut me out."

"Well, widows are dangerous things," laughed Fred, "and I confess to great partiality for them."

So the matter was settled that they were to attend the opera the next evening, which was a very rare thing in the lives of the two girls, for, while their mother kept a genteel boarding house and dressed them well, she could ill afford to indulge in any extravagances. The girls, however, were very sensible and industrious, and assisted their mother in all her household duties, as good and dutiful daughters should.

That evening Fred hinted to Phil that he thought it would be a good investment for him to establish himself in business and marry Josie, the younger daughter. Phil smiled, but made no reply. The next day Fred summoned a carriage and rode down to a savings bank, where they deposited two thousand dollars each, after which they purchased some very pretty presents for the mother and the two daughters, with which they returned home and made all three extremely happy when they saw what the gifts were.

Probably no happier party attended the opera that evening. Both the girls exerted themselves to entertain their escorts, and they reciprocated with great success. The supper was an expensive one, in one of the finest supper rooms in the city, and it was an event in the lives of the ladies.

During the week following they attended some place of amusement every evening, and the change of scene had a marvelous effect upon Phil, whose improvement was rapid in the extreme. The end of it found Phil and the younger daughter engaged, much to the satisfaction of the widow.

"This is all your work, Mr. Fearnot," said the mother. "You have been a good Samaritan all the way through. When you brought Phil to my house I thought you were simply a friend who was looking after him, and that it would end with that."

"Well, it would have ended there, madam," returned Fred, "had old Rosenbaum behaved himself, as I should have gone back to New York after seeing that Phil was in good hands and on a fair way to recovery. I never go back on a friend, and I believe that I have many who would stand by me in trouble just as I have stood by Phil. It was not charity, but friendship, which is the strongest tie that binds two men together. I have had a good time, have enjoyed myself immensely, and will always remember the kindness you have shown Phil and myself."

"Surely, Mr. Fearnot, when you leave us, it will not be forever?" said the widow.

"Oh, by no means. I will make it a rule never to stop half a day in Philadelphia without calling to see you, and when Phil and Miss Josie are ready to unite their fortunes I intend to come and be his best man, with her sister by my side."

The elder daughter on hearing that was more than pleased, as she had for some time been indulging the pleasing fancy that she might, in the course of time, become more than a mere friend and acquaintance of his.

Thus ended Fred Fearnot's good work in helping a friend in need, and a few days later he took leave of them to return to his home in New York, promising that he would return again at an early day and renew the pleasant associations. He learned, however, before leaving the city, that Rosenbaum had become a changed man, and that he had paid Dr. Forbes one thousand dollars for his medical attendance.

He didn't forget the poor seamstress, for on the morning he left the city he sent her a check for two hundred and fifty dollars by the hand of Mrs. Ramsey, who promised her all the work necessary in making up her youngest daughter's trousseau.

THE END.

Read "FRED FEARNOT AT COLLEGE; OR, WORK AND FUN AT YALE," which will be the next number (17) of "Work and Win."

LETTERS FROM
P. Adolphus Sweetcake
THE DUDE.

No. 14.

To the Editor of "Work and Win:"

The othah aftahnoon all of us fellahs at our store had a half holiday.

One of the firm died.

Weal kind of him, wasn't it? for it was a beautiful day.

As we came out of the store I happened to look at a passing sweet car.

Stuck in the woof of the car was a white flag.

Inside of the white flag was a wed ball.

That meant that there was fwozen ice at the Centwal Park, and also skating.

A bwilliant ideah came to me.

I was with Chollie and Gussie at the time.

"Chollie, old fellah," said I.

"Well, Dolphie, old chappie?" he weplied.

"What do you mean to do this aftahnoon?"

"Put up my hair."

"In cwimps?"

"Cwimps?"

"Yaas."

"What for?"

"To twy the effect. You know I go to a pawty to-morrow night, and I am in twouble. I don't know whethah to awwange my hair in a bang, or fwizz it, or put it in cwimps. Which do you pwefer, Dolphie?"

"Bwush it stwaight up."

"Up?"

"Yaas."

"But I will look fewocious."

"Cawn't help it, it's all the style."

"And you mean to wear youah hair that way?"

"Yaas."

"Then I will, too."

Queah, but the boys all follow my example in wegard to all mattahs of fashion. They look upon me as an authawity."

Gussie wemarked that he would like to bwush back his hair.

But he cawn't.

The weason is weal simple, he ain't got any hair to bwush. He had a fevah just a little while ago, and a bwutal doctah shaved it all off. Howwible cwuel, these hospital doctahs. It dwives Gussie weally cwazy sometimes, when he goes out in stwange society, and has to take his hat off, for people often take him for a pwize fightah. Gussie weighs neahly ninety pounds, and he looks vewwy fowmidable.

"Now, old chappies," I wemarked, "I'll tell you what we will do."

"What?" awsked them both.

"We have a half holiday."

"Yaas."

"Let's have some fun."

"How?"

"I have a weal weckless plan. We will go skating."

Chollie and Gussie looked aghast. All bwoken up weally.

"Dolphie, you are—aw—codding," said Chollie.

"Not a bit."

"You mean it?"

"Yaas."

"But the notion! Just think how fast you have to move youah legs in skating; and then you are liable to fall down and bweak youah awm or cwack youah head upon the ice. Don't let's go skating, it is too wough; let us stay at home and finish our fawney work for the fair."

"All wite; you two needn't come if you don't want to, but I mean to go. I twuly think that you are afwaid."

"Afwaid!" exclaimed Gussie, wewwoachfully. "Me afwaid! I believe that my bwavewy has nevah been questioned. Didn't you see me the othah night shake my cane at that fierce black cat that cwawled up on the fwont stoop, and cwly 'Go away, you dweadful monster?'"

"That's twue enough," said I; "but if you are coming skating, come along. I mean to leap on the vewy next car."

Chollie looked at Gussie.

Gussie gazed at Chollie.

"We must."

"We cawn't help it."

"If he went alone——"

"He might get dwounded."

"Or lost."

"Fwiendship wequires it."

"We will go."

"Much obliged, old fellahs," said I. "Heah comes the car."

We jump on, and I paid the fare. My salawy is neahly double that of Chollie or Gussie. I think all they get is nine dollahs a month, and so when we are out I have to do the gwand.

Awwiving at the Park, we got into a sleigh, although Chollie did not want to.

"Gweat heavens, Dolphie!" whispered he, "do you want to wuin youahself? The idea of such extwawagance! Fifteen cents more, and we could just as well have walked."

I weplied that I knew what I was doing—that, to use a low term that has just come into populah use, "there were no flies upon me." (Weally, though, what an absurd wemawk that is. Why the deuce should there be flies upon a man?)

We were dwiven wapidly to the lake.

We went to the skate house, and found out that the pwice of skates was thirty cents an hour. Beastly exawbitant, wasn't it?

Howevah, we agweed to get a pair; and, first, I would skate twenty minutes, then Gussie would skate twenty, and Chollie would finish up the hour; that would be just ten cents apiece, not such tewwible extwawagance aftah all.

I took the skates.

"Two dollahs," said the man.

"What for?" I asked.

"Security."

"For what?"

"The skates."

I gwew vewy indignant.

"Fellah!" said I, "do you think I would wun away with youah old skates?"

"Can't never tell what a dude will do!" coarsely weturned he; "no two dollahs, no skates. Them's my rules, and I'm a sticker."

Two dollahs!

He might as well have wequested two millions; we did not have seventy cents left.

"Keep youah skates," I said.

The man gwinned.

"If you ain't got no two dollahs, leave sumthin' else," said he.

Gussie has a watch—a silver one—weal silver, hands and all, and it goes, too. It was left him by his gwandfather. Awfully nice of his gwandfather, wasn't it?

Gussie pwoduced the watch.

"That super is so old that you can hear its bones rattle," said the man, as he shook it alongside of his ear; "never mind, though, I guess she's good for a twoer—take the skates."

It being my first twy upon the ice, I took the skates.

Half a dozen pimply-faced, dirty-nosed little boys followed me, and cwied:

"Boss, put yer skates on for a dime."

"No; go 'way!"

"I'll put 'em on for five cents."

I gwew mad.

"If you don't desist I will call a policeman and have you appwehended," said I, as I sat down upon a seat to put on my skates.

You must weally pawdon me if I pause heah, for one of the chappies has got a new pattawn for a tidy, and I am just dying to see it.

Yours as evah,

DOLPHIE.

P. S.—I have seen the tidy pattawn. It is perfectly lovely!

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