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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK H. R ***

BOOKS BY EDWIN LEFEVRE

SAMPSON ROCK OF WALL STREET. Illustrated. Post 8vo.
H. R. Illustrated. Post 8vo.

HARPER & BROTHERS, NEW YORK



**SHE PETRIFIED HERSELF WHEN SHE
BEHELD THE MAN WHO HAD MADE HER
FAMOUS**



BY

EDWIN LEFEVRE



HARPER & BROTHERS

NEW YORK AND LONDON

MCMXV

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TO ROBERT HOBART DAVIS

My dear Bob: In dedicating this book to you, I do more than follow the selfish impulse of pleasing myself. It was you who warned me that none of the usual fiction-labels would fit "H. R." To irritate the reader by compelling him to think in order to understand was, you told me, both unfair and unwise. But a writer occasionally may be permitted to please himself, and if his experiment fails there remains the satisfaction of having tried. I have not labelled my jokes explicitly nor have I written a single foot-note in the middle of a page. I have endeavored to reproduce a recognizable atmosphere by intentionally exaggerating certain phases of the attitude of New York toward the eternal verities. Not even for purposes of contrast have I felt bound to have a nice character in the book. But if the reader fails to get what you so clearly understood, and if the critics point out how completely I have failed to write a Satirical Romance of To-day, I can at least make certain of having one line in this volume with which none may find fault. And that, Great and Good Friend, is the line at the top of this page.

*E. L.
Dorset, Vt., June, 1915.*

Contents

[CHAPTER I](#)
[CHAPTER II](#)
[CHAPTER III](#)
[CHAPTER IV](#)
[CHAPTER V](#)
[CHAPTER VI](#)
[CHAPTER VII](#)
[CHAPTER VIII](#)
[CHAPTER IX](#)
[CHAPTER X](#)
[CHAPTER XI](#)
[CHAPTER XII](#)

[CHAPTER XIII](#)
[CHAPTER XIV](#)
[CHAPTER XV](#)
[CHAPTER XVI](#)
[CHAPTER XVII](#)
[CHAPTER XVIII](#)
[CHAPTER XIX](#)
[CHAPTER XX](#)
[CHAPTER XXI](#)
[CHAPTER XXII](#)
[CHAPTER XXIII](#)
[CHAPTER XXIV](#)
[CHAPTER XXV](#)
[CHAPTER XXVI](#)
[CHAPTER XXVII](#)
[CHAPTER XXVIII](#)
[CHAPTER XXIX](#)
[CHAPTER XXX](#)
[CHAPTER XXXI](#)
[CHAPTER XXXII](#)
[CHAPTER XXXIII](#)

[Pg 1]

I

The trouble was not in being a bank clerk, but in being a clerk in a bank that wanted him to be nothing but a bank clerk. That kind always enriches first the bank and later on a bit of soil.

Hendrik Rutgers had no desire to enrich either bank or soil.

He was blue-eyed, brown-haired, clear-skinned, rosy-cheeked, tall, well-built, and square-chinned. He always was in fine physical trim, which made people envy him so that they begrudged him advancement, but it also made them like him because they were so flattered when he reduced himself to their level by not bragging of his muscles. He had a quick-gaited mind and much fluency of speech. Also the peculiar sense of humor of a born leader that enabled him to laugh at what any witty devil said about others, even while it prevented him from seeing jokes aimed at his sacred self. He not only was congenitally stubborn—from his Dutch ancestors—but he had his Gascon grandmother's ability to believe whatever he wished to believe, and his Scandinavian great-grandfather's power to fill himself with Berserker rage in a twinkling. This made him begin all arguments by clenching his fists. Having in his veins so many kinds of un-American blood, he was one of the few real Americans in his own country, and he always said so.

[Pg 2]

It was this blood that now began to boil for no reason, though the reason was really the spring.

He had acquired the American habit of reading the newspapers instead of thinking, and his mind therefore always worked in head-lines. This time it worked like this: MORE MONEY AND MORE FUN!

Being an American, he instantly looked about for the best rung of the ladder of success.

He had always liked the cashier. A man climbs at first by his friends. Later by his enemies. That is why friends are superfluous later.

Hendrik, so self-confident that he did not even have to frown, approached the kindly superior.

"Mr. Coster," he said, pleasantly, "I've been on the job over two years. I've done my work satisfactorily. I need more money." You could see from his manner that it was much nicer to state facts than to argue.

The cashier was looking out of the big plate-glass window at the wonderful blue sky—New York! April! He swung on his swivel-chair and, facing Hendrik Rutgers, stared at a white birch by a trout stream three hundred miles north of the bank.

"Huh?" he grunted, absently. Then the words he had not heard indented the proper spot on his brain and he became a kindly bank cashier once more.

"My boy," he said, sympathetically, "I know how it is. Everybody gets the fit about this time of year. What kind of a fly would you use for— I mean, you go back to your cage and confine your attention to the K-L ledger."

A two hours walk in the Westchester hills would have made these two men brothers. Instead, Hendrik allowed himself to fill up with that anger which is apt to become indignation, and thus lead to freedom. Anger is wrath over injury; indignation is wrath over injustice: hence the freedom.

[Pg 3]

"I am worth more to the bank than I'm getting. If the bank wants me to stay—"

"Hendrik, I'll do you a favor. Go out and take a walk. Come back in ten minutes—cured!"

"Thanks, Mr. Coster. But suppose I still want a raise when I come back?"

"Then I'll accept your resignation."

"But I don't want to resign. I want to be worth still more to the bank so that the bank will be only too glad to pay me more. I don't want to live and die a clerk. That would be stupid for me, and also for the bank."

"Take the walk, Hen. Then come back and see me."

"What good will that do me?"

"As far as I can see, it will enable you to be fired by no less than the Big Chief himself. Tell Morson you are going to do something for me. Walk around and look at the people—thousands of them; they are working! Don't forget that, Hen; working; *making regular wages!* Good luck, my boy. I've never done this before, but you caught me fishing. I had just hooked a three-pounder," he finished, apologetically.

Hendrik was suffocating as he returned to his cage. He did not think; he felt—felt that everything was wrong with a civilization that kept both wild beasts and bank clerks in cages. He put on his hat, told the head bookkeeper he was going on an errand for Mr. Coster, and left the bank.

[Pg 4]

The sky was pure blue and the clouds pure white. There was in the air that which even when strained through the bank's window-screens had made Hendrik so restless. To breathe it, outdoors, made the step more elastic, the heartbeats more vigorous, the thoughts more vivid, the resolve stronger. The chimneys were waving white plumes in the bright air—waving toward heaven! He wished to hear the song of freedom of streams escaping from the mountains, of the snow-elves liberated by the sun; to hear birds with the spring in their throats admitting it, and the impatient breeze telling the awakening trees to hurry up with the sap. Instead, he heard the noises that civilized people make when they make money. Also, whenever he ceased to look upward, in the place of the free sunlight and the azure liberty of God's sky, he beheld the senseless scurrying of thousands of human ants bent on the same golden errand.

When a man looks down he always sees dollar-chasing insects—his brothers!

He clenched his fists and changed, by the magic of the season, into a fighting-man. He saw that the ant life of Wall Street was really a battle. Men here were not writing on ledgers, but fighting deserts, and swamps, and mountains, and heat, and cold, and hunger; fighting Nature; fighting her with gold for more gold. It followed that men were fighting men with gold for more gold! So, of course, men were killing men with gold for more gold!

So greatly has civilization advanced since the Jews crucified Him for interfering with business, that to-day man not only is able to use dollars to kill with, but boasts of it.

"Fools!" he thought, having in mind all other living men. After he definitely classified humanity he felt more kindly disposed toward the world.

[Pg 5]

After all, why should men fight Nature or fight men? Nature was only too willing to let men live who kept her laws; and men were only too willing to love their fellow-men if only dollars were not sandwiched in between human hearts. He saw, in great happy flashes, the comfort of living intelligently, brothers all, employers and employed, rid of the curse of money, the curse of making it, the curse of coining it out of the sweat and sorrow of humanity.

"Fools!" This time he spoke his thought aloud. A hurrying broker's clerk smiled superciliously, recognizing a stock-market loser talking of himself to himself, as they all do. But Hendrik really had in mind bank clerks who, instead of striking off their fetters, caressed them as though they were the flesh of sweethearts; or wept, as though tears could soften steel; or blasphemed, as though curses were cold-chisels! And every year the fetters were made thicker by the blacksmith Habit. To be a bank clerk, now and always; now and always nothing!

He now saw all about him hordes of sheep-hearted Things with pens behind their ears and black-cloth sleeve-protectors, who said, with the spitefulness of eunuchs or magazine editors:

"*You also are of us!*"

He would *not* be of them!

He might not be able to change conditions in the world of finance, not knowing exactly how to go about it, but he certainly could change the financial condition of Hendrik Rutgers. He would become a free man. He would do it by getting more money, if not from the bank, from somebody else. In all imperfectly Christianized democracies a man must capitalize his freedom or cease to be free.

[Pg 6]

He returned to the bank. He was worth thousands to it. This could be seen in his walk. And yet when the cashier saw Hendrik's face he instantly rose from his chair, held up a hand to check unnecessary speech, and said:

"Come on, Rutgers. You are a damned fool, but I have no time to convince you of it. You

understand, of course, that you'll never work for us again!"

"I shall tell the president."

"Yes, yes. He'll fire you."

"Not if he is intelligent, he won't," said Rutgers, with assurance.

The cashier looked at him pityingly and retorted: "A long catalogue of your virtues and manifold efficiency will weigh with him as much as two cubic inches of hydrogen. But I warned you."

"I know you did," said Hendrik, pleasantly.

Whereupon Coster frowned and said: "You are in class B—eight hundred dollars a year. In due time you will be promoted to class C—one thousand dollars. You knew our system and what the prospects were when you came to us. Other men are ahead of you; they have been here longer than you. We want to be fair to all. If you were going to be dissatisfied you should not have kept somebody else out of a job."

Hendrik did not know how fair the bank was to clerks in class C. He knew they were not fair to one man in class B. Facts are facts. Arguments are sea-foam.

"You say I kept somebody out of a job?" he asked.

"Yes, you did!"

The cashier's tone was so accusing that Hendrik said:

"Don't call a policeman, Mr. Coster."

"And don't you get fresh, Rutgers. Now see here; you go back and let the rise come in the usual course. I'll give you a friendly tip: once you are in class C you will be more directly under my own eye!"

Instead of feeling grateful for the implied promise, Hendrik could think only that they classified men like cattle. All steers weighing one thousand pounds went into pen B, and so on. This saved time to the butchers, who, not having to stop in order to weigh and classify, were enabled to slit many more throats per day.

He did not know it, but he thought all this because he wished to go fishing. Therefore he said: "I've got to have more money!" His fists clenched and his face flushed. He thought of cattle, of the ox-making bank, of being driven from pen A into pen B, and, in the end, fertilizer. "I've got to!" he repeated, thickly.

"You won't get it, take it from me. To ask for it now simply means being instantly fired."

"Being fired" sounded so much like being freed that Hendrik retorted, pleasantly:

"Mr. Coster, you may yet live to take your orders from me, if I am fired. But if I stay here, you never will; that's sure."

The cashier flushed angrily, opened his mouth, magnanimously closed it, and, with a shrug of his shoulders, preceded Hendrik Rutgers into the private office of the president.

"Mr. Goodchild," said Coster, so deferentially that Hendrik looked at him in surprise for a full minute before the surprise changed into contempt.

Mr. Goodchild, the president, did not even answer. He frowned, deliberately walked to a window and stared out of it sourly. A little deal of his own had gone wrong, owing to the stupidity of a subordinate.

He had lost MONEY!

He was a big man with jowls and little puffs under the eyes; also suspicions of purple in cheeks and nose and suspicions of everybody in his eyes. Presently he turned and spat upon the intruders. He did it with one mild little word:

"Well?"

He then confined his scowl to the cashier. The clerk was a species of the human dirt that unfortunately exists even in banks and has to be apologized for to customers at times, when said dirt, before arrogance, actually permits itself vocal chords.

They spoil the joy of doing business, damn 'em!

"This is the K-L ledger clerk," said Coster. "He wants a raise in salary. I told him 'No,' and he then insisted on seeing you." Years of brooding over the appalling possibility of having to look for another job had made the cashier a skilful shirker of responsibilities. He always spoke to the president as if he were giving testimony under oath.

"When one of these chaps, Mr. Coster," said the president in the accusing voice bank presidents use toward those borrowers whose collateral is inadequate, "asks for a raise and doesn't get it he begins to brood over his wrongs. People who think they are underpaid necessarily think they are overworked. And that is what makes socialists of them!"

He glared at the cashier, who acquiesced, awe-strickenly: "Yes, sir!"

"As a matter of fact," pursued the president, still accusingly, "we should reduce the bookkeeping force. Dawson tells me that at the Metropolitan National they average one clerk to two hundred and forty-two accounts. The best we've ever done is one to one hundred and eighty-eight. Reduce! Good morning."

[Pg 9]

"Mr. Goodchild," said Hendrik Rutgers, approaching the president, "won't you please listen to what I have to say?"

Mr. Goodchild was one of those business men who in their desire to conduct their affairs efficiently become mind-readers in order to save precious time. He knew what Rutgers was going to say, and therefore anticipated it by answering:

"I am very sorry for the sickness in your family. The best I can do is to let you remain with us for a little while, until whoever is sick is better." He nodded with great philanthropy and self-satisfaction.

But Hendrik said, very earnestly: "If I were content with my job I wouldn't be worth a whoop to the bank. What makes me valuable is that I want to be more. Every soldier of Napoleon carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack. That gave ambition to Napoleon's soldiers, who always won. Let your clerks understand that a vice-presidency can be won by any of us and you will see a rise in efficiency that will surprise you. Mr. Goodchild, it is a matter of common sense to—"

"Get out!" said the president.

Ordinarily he would have listened. But he had lost money; that made him think only of one thing—that he had lost money!

The general had suddenly discovered that his fortress was not impregnable! He did not wish to discuss feminism.

Of course, Hendrik did not know that the president's request for solitude was a confession of weakness and, therefore, in the nature of a subtle compliment. And therefore, instead of feeling flattered, Hendrik saw red. It is a common mistake. But anger always stimulated his faculties. All men who are intelligent in their wrath have in them the makings of great leaders of men. The rabble, in anger, merely becomes the angry rabble—and stays rabble.

[Pg 10]

Hendrik Rutgers aimed full at George G. Goodchild, Esq., a look of intense astonishment.

"Get out!" repeated the president.

Hendrik Rutgers turned like a flash to the cashier and said, sharply: "Didn't you hear? *Get out!*"

"You!" shouted Mr. George G. Goodchild.

"Who? *Me?*" Hendrik's incredulity was abysmal.

"Yes! You!" And the president, dangerously flushed, advanced threateningly toward the insolent beast.

"What?" exclaimed Hendrik Rutgers, skeptically. "Do you mean to tell me you really are the jackass your wife thinks you?"

Fearing to intrude upon private affairs, the cashier discreetly left the room. The president fell back a step. Had Mrs. Goodchild ever spoken to this creature? Then he realized it was merely a fashion of speaking, and he approached, one pudgy fist uplifted. The uplift was more for rhetorical effect than for practical purposes, which has been a habit with most uplifts since money-making became an exact science. But Hendrik smiled pleasantly, as his forebears always did in battle, and said:

"If I hit you once on the point of the jaw it'll be the death-chair for mine. I am young. Please control yourself."

"You infernal scoundrel!"

"What has Mrs. Goodchild ever done to me, that I should make her a widow?" You could see he was sincerely trying to be not only just, but judicial.

[Pg 11]

The president of the bank gathered himself together. Then, as one flings a dynamite bomb, he utterly destroyed this creature. "You are *discharged!*"

"Tut, tut! I discharged the bank ages ago; I'm only waiting for the bank to pack up. Now you listen to me."

"Leave this room, sir!" He said it in that exact tone of voice.

But Hendrik did not vanish into thin air. He commanded, "Take a good look at me!"

The president of the bank could not take orders from a clerk in class B. Discipline must be maintained at any cost. He therefore promptly turned away his head. But Hendrik drew near and said:

"Do you hear?"

There was in the lunatic's voice something that made Mr. George G. Goodchild instantly bethink himself of all the hold-up stories he had ever heard. He stared at Hendrik with the fascination of fear.

"What do you see?" asked Rutgers, tensely. "A human soul? No. You see K-L. You think machinery means progress, and therefore you don't want men, but machines, hey?"

The president did not see K-L, as at the beginning of the interview. Instead of the two enslaving letters he saw two huge, emancipating fists. This man was far too robust to be a safe clerk. He had square shoulders. Yes, he had!

The president was not the ass that Hendrik had called him. His limitations were the limitations of all irreligious people who regularly go to church. He thus attached too much importance to To-day, though perhaps his demand loans had something to do with it. His sense of humor was altogether phrasal, like that of most multimillionaires. But if he was too old a man to be consistently intelligent, he was also an experienced banker. He knew he had to listen or be licked. He decided to listen. He also decided, in order to save his face, to indulge in humorous speech.

[Pg 12]

"Young man," he asked, with a show of solicitude, "do you expect to become Governor of New York?"

But Hendrik was not in a smiling mood, because he was listening to a speech he was making to himself, and his own applause was distinctly enjoyable, besides preventing him from hearing what the other was saying. That is what makes all applause dangerous. He went on, with an effect of not having been interrupted.

"Machines never mutiny. They, therefore, are desirable in your System. At the same time, the end of all machines is the scrap-heap. Do *you* expect to end in junk?"

"I was not thinking of *my* finish," the president said, with much politeness.

"Yes, you are. Shall I prove it?"

"Not now, please," pleaded the president, with a look of exaggerated anxiety at the clock. It brought a flush of anger to Hendrik's cheeks, seeing which the president instantly felt that glow of happiness which comes from gratified revenge. Ah, to be witty! But his smile vanished. Hendrik, his fists clenched, was advancing. The president was no true humorist, not being of the stuff of which martyrs are made. He was ready to recant when,

"Good morning, daddy," came in a musical voice.

Hendrik drew in his breath sharply at the narrowness of his escape. She who approached the purple-faced tyrant was the most beautiful girl in all the round world.

[Pg 13]

It was spring. The girl had brought in the first blossoms of the season on her cheeks, and she had captured the sky and permanently imprisoned it in her eyes. She was more than beautiful; she was everything that Hendrik Rutgers had ever desired, and even more!

"Er—good morning, Mr.—ah—" began the president in a pleasant voice.

Hendrik waved his hand at him with the familiar amiability we use toward people whose political affiliations are the same as ours at election-time. Then he turned toward the girl, looked at her straight in the eyes for a full minute before he said, with impressive gravity:

"Miss Goodchild, your father and I have failed to agree in a somewhat important business matter. I do not think he has used very good judgment, but I leave this office full of forgiveness toward him because I have lived to see his daughter at close range, in the broad light of day."

The only woman before whom a man dares to show himself a physical coward is his wife, because no matter what he does she knows him.

Mr. Goodchild was frightened, but he said, blusteringly, "That will do, you—er—you!"

He pointed toward the door, theatrically. But Hendrik put his fingers to his lips and said "Hush, George!" and spoke to her again:

"Miss Goodchild, I am going to tell you the truth, which is a luxury mighty rare in a bank president's private office, believe me."

[Pg 14]

She stared at him with a curiosity that was not far from fascination. She saw a well-dressed, well-built, good-looking chap, with particularly bright, understanding eyes, who was on such familiar terms with her father that she wondered why he had never called.

"Let me say," he pursued, fervently, "without any hope of reward, speaking very conservatively, that you are, without question, the most beautiful girl in all the world! I have been nearly certain of it for some time, but now I *know*. You are not only perfectly wonderful, but wonderfully perfect—all of you! And now take a good look at me—"

"Yes; just before he is put away," interjected the president, trying to treat tragedy humorously before this female of the species. But for the fear of the newspapers, he would have rung for the private detective whose business was to keep out cranks, bomb-throwing anarchists, and those fellow-Christians who wished to pledge their word of honor as collateral on time-loans of less

than five dollars. But she thought this friendly persiflage meant that the interesting young man was a social equal as well as a person of veracity and excellent taste. So she smiled non-committally. She was, alas, young!

"They will not put me away for thinking what I say," asserted Hendrik, with such conviction that she blushed. Having done this, she smiled at him directly, that there might be no wasted effort. Wasn't it spring, and wasn't he young and fearless? And more than all that, wasn't he a *novelty*, and she a New York woman?

"When you hear the name of Hendrik Rutgers, or see it in the newspapers, remember it belongs to the man who thought you were the only perfectly beautiful girl God ever made. And He has done pretty well at times, you must admit."

[Pg 15]

With some people, both blasphemy and breakfast foods begin with a small "b". The Only Perfect One thought he was a picturesque talker!

"Mr. Rutgers, I am sorry you must be going," said the president, with a pleasant smile, having made up his mind that this young man was not only crazy, but harmless—unless angered. "But you'll come back, won't you, when you are famous? We should like to have your account."

Hendrik ignored him. He looked at her and said:

"Do *you* prefer wealth to fame? Anybody can be rich. But famous? Which would you rather hear: *There goes Miss \$80,000-a-year Goodchild* or *That is that wonderful Goodchild girl everybody is talking about?*"

She didn't know what to answer, the question being a direct one and she a woman. But this did not injure Hendrik in her eyes; for women actually love to be compelled to be silent in order to let a man speak—at certain times, about a certain subject. Her father, after the immemorial fashion of unintelligent parents, answered for her. He said, stupidly: "It never hurts to have a dollar or two, dear Mr. Rutgers."

"Dollar or two! Why, there are poor men whose names on your list of directors would attract more depositors to this bank than the name of the richest man in the world. Even for your bank, between St. Vincent de Paul and John D. Rockefeller, whom would you choose? Dollars! When you can *dream!*" Hendrik's eyes were gazing steadily into hers. She did not think he was at all lunatical. But George G. Goodchild had reached the limit of his endurance and even of prudence. He rose to his feet, his face deep purple.

[Pg 16]

However, Providence was in a kindly mood. At that very moment the door opened and a male stenographer appeared, note-book in hand. Civilization does its life-saving in entirely unexpected ways, even outside of hospitals.

"*Au revoir*, Miss Goodchild. Don't forget the name, will you?"

"I won't," she promised. There was a smile on her flower-lips and firm resolve in her beautiful eyes. It mounted to Hendrik's head and took away his senses, for he waved his hand at the purple president, said, with a solemnity that thrilled her, "*Pray for your future son-in-law!*" and walked out with the step of a conqueror. And the step visibly gained in majesty as he overheard the music of the spheres:

"Daddy, who is he?"

At the cashier's desk he stopped, held out his hand, and said with that valiant smile with which young men feel bound to announce their defeat, "I'm leaving, Mr. Coster."

"Good morning," said Coster, coldly, studiously ignoring the outstretched hand. Rutgers was now a discharged employee, a potential hobo, a possible socialist, an enemy of society, one of the dangerous Have-Nots. But Hendrik felt so much superior to this creature with a regular income that he said, pityingly: "Mr. Coster, your punishment for assassinating your own soul is that your children are bound to have the hearts of clerks. You are now definitely nothing but a bank cashier. That's what!"

"Get out!" shrieked the bank cashier, plagiarizing from a greater than he.

The tone of voice made the private policeman draw near. When he saw it was Hendrik to whom Mr. Coster was speaking, he instantly smelled liquor. What other theory for an employee's loud talking in a bank? He hoped Hendrik would not swear audibly. The bank would blame it on the policeman's lack of tact.

[Pg 17]

"*Au revoir.*" And Hendrik smiled so very pleasantly that the policeman, whose brains were in his biceps, sighed with relief. At the same time the whisper ran among the caged clerks in the mysterious fashion of all bad news—the oldest of all wireless systems!

Hendrik Rutgers was fired!

Did life hold a darker tragedy than to be out of a job? A terrible world, this, to be hungry in.

As Hendrik walked into the cage to get his few belongings, pale faces bent absorbingly over their ledgers. To be fed, to grow comfortably old, to die in bed, always at so much per week. Ideal! No wonder, therefore, that his erstwhile companions feared to look at what once had been a clerk. And then, too, the danger of contagion! A terrible disease, freedom, in a money-making republic,

but, fortunately, rare, and the victims provided with food, lodging, and strait-jackets at the expense of the state. Or without strait-jackets: bars.

Hendrik got his pay from the head of his department, who seemed of a sudden to recall that he had never been formally introduced to this Mr. H. Rutgers. This filled Hendrik at first with great anger, and then with a great joy that he was leaving the inclosure wherein men's thoughts withered and died, just like plants, for the same reason—lack of sunshine.

On his way to the street he paused by his best friend—a little old fellow with unobtrusive side-whiskers who turned the ledger's pages over with an amazing deftness, and wore the hunted look that comes from thirty years of fear of dismissal. To some extent the old clerk's constant boasting about the days when he was a reckless devil had encouraged Hendrick.

[Pg 18]

"Good-by, Billy," said Hendrik, holding out his hand. "I'm going."

Little old Billy was seen by witnesses talking in public with a discharged employee! He hastily said, "Too bad!" and made a pretense of adding a column of figures.

"Too bad nothing. See what it has done for you, to stay so long. I laid out old Goodchild, and the only reason why I stopped was I thought he'd get apoplexy. But say, the daughter— She is some peach, believe me. I called him papa-in-law to his face. You should have seen him!"

Billy shivered. It was even worse than any human being could have imagined.

"Good-by, Rutgers," he whispered out of a corner of his mouth, never taking his eyes from the ledger.

"You poor old— No, Billy! Thank you a thousand times for showing me Hendrik Rutgers at sixty. Thanks!" And he walked out of the bank overflowing with gratitude toward Fate that had hung him into the middle of the street. From there he could look at the free sun all day; and of nights, at the unfettered stars. It was better than looking at the greedy hieroglyphics wherewith a stupid few enslaved the stupider many.

He was free!

He stood for a moment on the steps of the main entrance. For two years he had looked from the world into the bank. But now he looked from the bank out—on the world. And that was why that self-same world suddenly changed its aspect. The very street looked different; the sidewalk wore an air of strangeness; the crowd was not at all the same.

[Pg 19]

He drew in a deep breath. The April air vitalized his blood.

This new world was a world to conquer. He must fight!

The nearest enemy was the latest. This is always true. Therefore Hendrik Rutgers, in thinking of fighting, thought of the bank and the people who made of banks temples to worship in.

All he needed now was an excuse. There was no doubt that he would get it. Some people call this process the autohypnosis of the great.

Two sandwich-men slouched by in opposite directions. One of them stopped and from the edge of the sidewalk stared at a man cleaning windows on the fourteenth story of a building across the way. The other wearily shuffled southward. Above his head swayed an enormous amputated foot.

Rutgers himself walked briskly to the south. To avoid a collision with a hurrying stenographer-girl—if it had been a male he would have used a short jab—he unavoidably jostled the chiropodist's advertisement into the gutter. The sandwich-man looked meekly into Rutgers's pugnacious face and started to cross the street.

Hendrik felt he should apologize, but before his sense of duty could crystallize into action the man was too far away. So Hendrik turned back. The other sandwich-man was still looking at the window-cleaner on the fourteenth story across the street. Happening to look down, he saw coming a man who looked angry. Therefore the sandwich-man meekly stepped into the gutter, out of the way.

[Pg 20]

It was the second time within one minute! Hendrik stopped and spoke peevishly to the meek one in the gutter:

"Why did you move out of my way?"

The sandwich-man looked at him uneasily; then, without answering, walked away sullenly.

"Here I am," thought Rutgers, "a man without a job; and there he is, a man with a job and afraid of me!"

Something was wrong—or right. Something always is, to the born fighter.

Who could be afraid of a man without a job but sandwich-men who always walked along the curb so they could be pushed off into the gutter among the other beasts? Nobody ever deliberately became a sandwich-man. When circumstances, the police, hopeless inefficiency, or shattered credit prevented a hobo from begging, stealing, murdering, or getting drunk, he became a sandwich-man in order to live until he could rise again. Whatever a sandwich-man changed himself into, it was always advancement. Once a sandwich-man, never again a sandwich-man. It

was not boards they carried, but the printed certificates of hopelessness.

Men who could not keep steady jobs became either corpses or sandwich-men. The sandwich illustrated the tyranny of the regular income just as the need of a regular income illustrated the need of Christianity.

The sandwich thus had become the spirit of the times.

The spring-filled system of Hendrik Rutgers began to react for a second time to a feeling of anger, and this for a second time turned his thoughts to fighting. To fight was to conquer. There were two ways of conquering—by fighting with gold and by fighting with brains. Who won by gold perished by gold. That was why a numismatical bourgeoisie never fought. Hendrik had no gold. So he would fight with brains. He therefore would win. Also, he would fight for his fellow-men, which would make his fight noble. That is called "hedging," for defeat in a noble cause is something to be proud of in the newspapers. The reason why all hedging is intelligent is that victory is always Victory when you talk about it.

[Pg 21]

The sandwich-men were the scum of the earth.

Ah! It was a thrilling thought: To lead men who could no longer fight for themselves against the world that had marred their immortal souls; and then to compel that same world to place three square meals a day within their astonished bellies!

The man who could make the world do that could do anything. Since he could do anything, he could marry a girl who not only was very beautiful, but had a very rich and dislikable father. The early Christians accomplished so much because they not only loved God, but hated the devil.

Hendrik Rutgers found both the excuse and the motive power.

One minute after a man of brains perceives the need of a ladder in order to climb, the rain of ladders begins.

The chest-inflating egotism of the monopolistic tendency, rather than the few remaining vestiges of Christianity, keeps Protestants in America from becoming socialists. Hendrik filled his lungs full of self-oxygen and of the consciousness of power for good, and decided to draw up the constitution of his union. He would do it himself in order to produce a perfect document; perfect in everything. A square deal; no more, no less. That meant justice toward everybody, even toward the public.

[Pg 22]

This union, being absolutely fair, would be more than good, more than intelligent; it would pay.

Carried away by his desire to help the lowest of the low, he constituted himself into a natural law. He would grade his men, be the sole judge and arbiter of their qualifications, and even of their proper wages.

Hendrik walked back toward the last sandwich-man and soon overtook him. "Hey, there, you!" he said, tapping the rear board with his hand.

The sandwich-man did not turn about. Really, what human being could wish to speak to him?

Hendrik Rutgers walked for a few feet beside the modest artist who was proclaiming to a purblind world the merits of an optician's wares, and spoke again, politely:

"I want to see you, on business."

The man's lips quivered, then curved downward, immobilizing themselves into a fixed grimace of fear. "I—I 'ain't done no-nothin'," he whined, and edged away.

This was what society had done to an immortal soul!

"Hell!" said Hendrik Rutgers between clenched teeth. "I'm not a fly-cop. I've just got a plain business proposition to make to you."

"If you'll tell me where yer place is, I'll come aroun'—" began the man, so obviously lying that Rutgers's anger shifted from society and tyranny on to the thing between sandwich-boards—the thing that refused to be his brother.

"You damned fool!" he hissed, fraternally. "You come with me—now."

The inverted crescent of the man's lips trembled, and presently there issued from it, "Well, I 'ain't done—"

[Pg 23]

Charity, which is not always astute, made H. Rutgers say with a kindly cleverness to his poor brother, "I'll tell you how you are going to make more money than you ever earned before."

The prospect of making more money than he ever earned before brought no name of joy into the blear and furtive eyes. Instead, he sidled, crabwise, into the middle of the street.

"No, you don't!" said Rutgers so menacingly that the sandwich-man shivered. It was clear that, to feed this starving man, force would be necessary. This never discourages the true philanthropist. Rutgers, however, feeling that Christian forbearance should be used before resorting to the ultimate diplomacy, said, with an earnest amiability: "Say, Bo, d'you want to fill your belly so that if you ate any more you'd bust?"

At the hint of a promise of a sufficiency of food the man opened his mouth, stared at Rutgers, and did not speak. He couldn't because he did not close his mouth.

"All the grub you can possibly eat, three times a day. Grub, Bo! All you want, any time you want it. Hey? What?"

The sandwich-man's open mouth opened wider. In his eyes there was no fear, no hunger, no incredulity, nothing only an abyss deep as the human soul, that returned no answer whatever.

"Do you want," pursued the now optimistic Hendrik Rutgers, "to drink all you can hold? The kind that don't hurt you if you drink a gallon! Booze, and grub, and a bed, and money in your pocket, and nobody to go through your duds while you sleep. Hey?"

[Pg 24]

The sandwich-man spasmodically opened and closed his mouth in the unhuman fashion of a ventriloquist's puppet. Rutgers heard the click, but never a word. It filled him with pity. The desire to help such brothers as this grew intense. Next to feeding them there was nothing like talking to them about food and drink in a kindly way.

"What do you say, Bo?" he queried, gently, almost tenderly.

The man's teeth chattered a minute before he said, huskily, "Wh-what m-must I do?"

"Let's go to the Battery," said Rutgers, "and I'll tell you all about it."

The mission of history is to prove that Fate sends the right man for the right place at the right time. While Hendrik Rutgers talked, the sandwich-man listened with his stomach; and when Hendrik Rutgers promised, the sandwich-man believed with his soul. Rutgers told Fleming that all sandwich-men must join the union; that as soon as he and the other present sandwichers were enrolled on its books no more members would be admitted, except as a superabundance of jobs justified additional admissions; and at that it would require a nine-tenths vote to elect, thus preventing a surplus of labor and likewise a slump in wages. The union would compel advertisers in the future to pay twenty cents an hour and would guarantee both steady work and these wages to its members; there would be neither an initiation fee nor strike-fund assessments; the dues of one cent a day were collectible only when the member worked and received union wages for his day's work. Any member could lay off any time he felt like it, unmulcted and unfired. There was only one thing that all sandwich-men had to do to be in good standing; obey the secretary and treasurer of the union—Mr. H. Rutgers—in all union matters.

[Pg 25]

The sandwich business, once unionized, would become a lucrative profession and therefore highly moral, and therefore its members would automatically cease to be pariahs, notwithstanding congenital fitness for same. Anybody who cannot only defy Nature, but make her subservient to the wishes of an infinitely higher intelligence, is fit to be a labor-leader. And he generally is.

Fleming agreed to round up those of his colleagues whose peregrinations extended south of Chambers Street. He would ask them to come to the Battery on the next day at noon.

So thrilled was Hendrik by his rescue-work among the wreckages that it never occurred to him to doubt his own success. This made him know exactly what to say to Fleming.

"Don't just ask them to come. Tell them that there will be free beers and free grub. Tell them anything you damn please, but bring them! *Do you hear me?*" He gripped the sandwich-man's arm so tightly that Fleming's lips began to quiver. "And if you don't bring a bunch, God help you!"

"Ye-yes, sir; I will. Sure!" whimpered Fleming, staring fascinatedly at those eyes which both promised and menaced.

And in Fleming's own eyes Hendrik saw the four "B's" which form the great equation of all democracies: *Bread + Bludgeon = Born Boss!*

Such men always know how to *say* everything. This is more important than *thinking* anything.

"Remember the beer!" Brother Hendrik spoke pleasantly, and Fleming nodded eagerly. "And get on the job," hissed Secretary Rutgers; and Fleming shivered and hurried away before the licking came.

[Pg 26]

Hendrik himself walked briskly up-town. When a man is pleased with himself he can always continue in that condition by the simple expedient of continuing to see whatever he wishes to see. Hendrik opened his eyes very wide and continued to see the ladder of success that great men use to climb to their changing heaven. Hendrik's heaven just then happened to be one in which a man of brains could make the money-makers pay him for allowing them to make money for him. After finding the ladder, all that was necessary was for Hendrik to think of George G. Goodchild's money. That made him see red; and whenever he saw red he could see no obstacles whatever; and because of his self-inflicted blindness he was intelligently ready to tackle anything, even the job of helping his fellow-men. To be an efficient philanthropist a man must have not only love, but murder, in his heart. That is one of the two hundred and eighty-six reasons why scientific charities make absolutely no inroads on the world's store of poverty.

Mr. Rutgers met the charter members of his union at the time and place indicated by Providence through the medium of Mr. Rutgers's lips.

There were fourteen sandwich-men.

Hendrik, not knowing what to say, gazed at the faces before him in impressive silence. So long as you keep a man guessing, he is at your mercy. Orators have already discovered this.

"Holy smoke! What in the name of Maginnis do you call this?" shrieked a messenger-boy. "Free freak show?"

A crowd gathered about them by magic. Opportunity held out its right hand and Hendrik Rutgers grasped it in both his own. If all New York could be made to talk about him, all New York could be made to pay him, as it always pays for the privilege of talking of the same thing at the same time. You cannot get anybody to talk about the Ten Commandments; therefore, there is nobody to listen; therefore nobody capitalizes them.

[Pg 27]

It *is* the first rung that really matters. All other rungs in the ladder of success are easier to find and to fit. Hendrik could now gather together his various impulses and thoughts and motives and arrange them in their proper sequence, as great men do, to make easier the work of the historian. It was a crusade that he had undertaken, for the liberation of the most abject of all modern slaves; he had changed the scum of the earth into respectable humanity.

That was history.

The facts, however, happened to be as follows: He threw up his job because he wished to go fishing, which of course made him angry because his fellow-clerks were slaves, and he therefore got himself discharged by the president, which made him hate the president so that the hatred showed in Hendrik's face and made two sandwich-men so afraid that he couldn't help organizing the sandwich-men's union because he could boss it, and that would make people talk about him, which would put money in his pocket; and once he was both rich and famous he would be the equal of the greatest and as such could pick and choose; and he would pick Grace Goodchild and choose her for his wife, which would make him rich.

In Europe the ability promptly to recognize the kindness of chance is called opportunism. Here we boast of it as the American spirit. That is why American bankers so often find pleasure in proudly informing you that it pays to be honest!

[Pg 28]

"Listen, you!" said Hendrik to the sandwich-men. These were the tools wherewith he would hammer the first rung into place.

They looked at him, incredulous in advance. This attitude on the part of the majority has caused republics at all times to be ruled by the minority. The vice of making money also arose from the fact that suspicious people are so easy to fool that even philosophers succumb to the temptation.

"Just now you are nothing but a bunch of dirty hoboos. Scum of the earth!" It would not do to have followers who had illusions about themselves. This is fundamental.

"Say, I didn't come here to listen to—"

"You—!" said Hendrik Rutgers, and did not smile. "You came here just exactly for that. See?" And he walked up to within six inches of the speaker, not knowing that his anger gave him the fighting face. "You came to listen to me just as long as I am talking—unless you are pining to spend your last three hours in the hospital. Do you get me? Which for yours?"

"Listen!" replied the sandwich-man. He had been poor so long that from force of habit he economized even in words.

"By cripes! here I am spending valuable time so as to make you bums into prosperous men—"

"Where do you come in, Bill?" asked a voice from the rear.

"I don't have to come in. I am in. You fellows have got to join the union. Then you'll get good wages, easy hours, decent—"

[Pg 29]

"Yeh; but—"

Hendrik turned to the man who had interrupted—a short chap advertising a chain of hat-stores and asked, "But what?"

"Nutt'n!" The hatter had once helped about a prize-fighter's training-quarters, hence the quick duck.

"Also, you'll have easy—"

"Easy!" The hatter had spoken prematurely again.

"What?" scowled Hendrik.

"Hours," hastily explained the man.

"We ask only for fair play," pursued the leader.

"Yeh; sure!" murmured Fleming, with the cold enthusiasm of all paid lieutenants of causes.

"And we must make up our minds to play fair with employers, so that employers will play fair with us."

"Like hell they will!" This was from a tall, thin, toothless chap. Reason: Tapeworm and booze.

Name: Mulligan. Recreation: Chiropodist's favorite.

"I'll prove it to you," said Hendrik, very earnestly.

"Perhaps *to* but not *by* me," muttered Mulligan.

"Union wages will be twenty cents an hour."

"Never get it!" mumbled an old fellow with what they call waiter's foot—flattened arch. "Never!"

"Never," came in chorus from all the others, their voices ringing with conviction.

"I'll have the jobs to give out. I guess I know how much you'll get." The flame of hope lit fourteen pairs of blear eyes. Maybe this boob had the cash and desired to separate himself from it. All primitive people think the fool is touched of God. Hunger makes men primitive.

"I'll fix the wages!" declared Hendrik again. He saw himself feeding these men; therefore he felt he owned them absolutely. It isn't, of course, necessary actually to feed people, or even to promise to feed them, to own them. Nevertheless, his look of possession imposed on these victims of a democracy. They mutely acknowledged a boss.

[Pg 30]

Instantly perceiving this, a sense of kindly responsibility came upon Hendrik. These were his children. He said, paternally, "We'll now have a beer—on me!"

Fleming, to show his divine right to the place of vice-regent, led the way to a joint on Washington Street.

Hendrik saw, with carefully concealed delight, the sensation caused even in the Syrian-infested streets of the quarter by the sight of a handful of sandwich-men in full regalia. He heard the exclamations that fell from polyglot lips. It was a foretaste of success, the preface of a famous man's biography!

The union drank fifteen beers, slowly—and quickly wiped the day's free lunch from the face of the earth. The huskiest of the three bartenders began to work with one hand, the other being glued to a bung-starter. He felt it had to come.

"I'm boss!" said Hendrik to his children as a preliminary to discussing the by-laws.

"I'm willin'!"

"Same here!"

"Let 'er go, cap!"

"Suits *me*!"

They were all eager to please him—too eager. It made him ask, disgustedly:

"Don't you fellows care who is boss?"

"Naw! Don't we have to have one, anyhow?"

"Yes. But to have one crammed down your throats—"

[Pg 31]

"The beer helps the swallowing, boss," said the hatter with conviction—and a fresh hope!

"There doesn't seem to be a man among the whole lot of you," said Hendrik.

A young fellow of about twenty-eight, very pale, wearing steel-rimmed spectacles, spoke back, "If you'd starved for three weeks and two days, and on top of it been kicked and cheated and held up, there wouldn't be a hell of a lot of fight in you, my wise gazabo."

"That's exactly what would make me fight," retorted Hendrik, angrily. "Each of you has a vote; each of you, therefore, has as much to say as to how this country should be run as any millionaire. Don't you know what to do with your vote?"

"You're lucky to get a quarter and two nights' lodging nowadays," said the old man with waiter's foot. "The time we elected Gilroy I made fifteen bones and was soused for a mont'. Shorty McFadden made thirty-five dollars—"

"Any of you Republicans?"

"No!" came in a great and indignant chorus.

"I used to be!" defiantly asserted the young man with the spectacles and the pale face and the beaten look.

"And now?"

"Just a lame duck, I guess."

"Too much rumatism," suggested a husky voice, and all the others laughed. The depths of degradation are reached when you can laugh at your own degradation.

"Are any of you socialists?" asked Hendrik.

They looked at him doubtfully. They wished to please him and would have answered accordingly

if they had known what he wished to get from them. What they wished to get from him, in the way of speech, was another invitation to tank up. But when in doubt, all men deny. It is good police-court practice. Three veterans, therefore, tentatively said:

[Pg 32]

"No!"

Hendrik was disappointed, but did not show it. He asked, "Are any of you Christians?"

The crowd fell back.

"Is there one man among you who believes in God?"

They stared at one another in the consternation of utter hopelessness. Mulligan was the first to break the painful silence. He said, with a sad triumph:

"I knew it. Stung again! They'll do anything to get you to listen. We fell for it like boobs."

"What is that?" said Hendrik, sharply.

"I was sayin'," replied Mulligan, grateful that he was one schooner ahead, anyhow, "that I can listen to a good brother like you by the hour when I ain't thirsty. The dryness in my throat affects my hearin'. If you blow again I'll believe in miracles. How could I help it?"

Fourteen pairs of eyes turned hopefully toward the wonder-worker. But he said in the habitual tone of all born leaders:

"You—bums, get around! I'm going to lick hell out of Mulligan. And after that, to show I'm boss, I'll blow again. But first the licking."

Hendrik gave his hat to Fleming to hold and began to turn up his sleeves. But Mulligan hastily said, "I'm converted, boss!" and actually looked pious. How he did it, nobody could tell, for he was not a Methodist by birth or education.

"Mulligan, the union wages will be forty schooners a day." Hendrik said, sternly. Again it was genius—that is, to talk so that men will understand you.

[Pg 33]

"Kill the scabs!" shrieked Mulligan, and there was murder in his eyes.

Hendrik Rutgers put his right foot firmly on the second rung of the ladder. He did it by spending seventy-five cents for the second time. Fifteen beers.

"Everybody," he said, threateningly, "wait until the schooners are on the bar!" thereby disappointing those who had hoped to ring in an extra glass during the excitement. But all that Hendrik desired was to inculcate salutary notions of discipline and obedience under circumstances that try men's souls. He yelled:

"Damn you, step back! All of you! *Back!*"

They fell back.

The quivering line, now two feet from the beer, did not look at the glasses full of cheer, but at the eyes full of lickings. They gazed at him, open-mouthed; they gazed and kept on gazing, two feet from the bar—the length of the arm from the beer!

Not obey? After that? There is no doubt of it; they are born!

"To the union! All together! *Drink!*" They did not observe that this man was regulating even their thirst. The reason they did not notice it was that they were so busy assuaging it.

They drank. Then they looked at Hendrik. He was a law of nature. He shook his head. They understood his "No." It was like death. To save their faces they began to clamor for free lunch.

"Get to hell out of here!" said the proprietor.

"Do you want your joint smashed?" asked Rutgers. He approached the man and looked at him from across a gulf of six inches that made escape impossible. Whatever the proprietor saw in Rutgers's eyes made him turn away.

[Pg 34]

"Come across with the free lunch," Hendrik bade the proprietor. To his men he said, "Boys, get ready!"

These men-that-were—miserable worms, scum of the earth, walking cuspidors—began to take off their armor. The bartenders were husky, but hadn't the boss commanded, *Get ready!* and didn't all men know he meant, *Get ready* TO EAT? Moreover, each sandwich felt he might dodge the bung-starters, but not the boss's right flipper!

The union was making ready to fight with the desperation of men whose retreat is cut on by a foe who never heard of The Hague Convention.

"Hey, no rough-house!" yelled the proprietor.

"Free lunch!" retorted Hendrik. Then he added, "*Quick!*"

The sandwich-men's nostrils began to dilate with the contagion of the battle spirit. One after another, these beasts of the gutter took off the boards and leaned them against the wall, out of

the way, and eyed the boss expectantly, waiting for the word—*men once more!* Hendrik, with the eye of a strategist and the look of a prize-fighter, planned the attack. Like a very wise man who lived to be the most popular of all our Presidents, he did his thinking aloud.

On occasions like this Hendrik's mind also worked in battle-cries and best expressed itself in action.

"Free lunch," said Hendrik, "is free. It is everybody's. It is therefore *ours!*"

"Give us our grub!" hoarsely cried the union.

"Three to each bartender," said Hendrik. "When I yell 'Now!' jump in, from both ends of the bar at once—six of you here; you six over there. Fleming, you smash the mirrors back of the bar with those empty schooners. Mulligan, you cop some bottles of booze, and wait outside—do you hear? *Wait outside!*—for us. I'll attend to the cash-register myself. Now, you," he said peremptorily to the proprietor, "do we get the free lunch? *Say no; won't you, please?*"

[Pg 35]

Hendrik radiated battle. The derelicts took on human traits as their eyes lit up with visions of pillage. Fleming grasped a heavy schooner in each hand. Mulligan had his eye on three bottles of whisky and, for the first time in years, was using his mind—planning the get-away.

The proprietor saw all this and also perceived that he could not afford a victory. It was much cheaper to give them seven cents worth of spoiled rations. Therefore he decided in favor of humanity.

"Do what I told you, Jake," he said, with the smile of a man who has inveigled friends into accepting over-expensive Christmas presents. "Let 'em have the rest of the lunch—*all they want.*" He smiled again, much pleased with his kindly astuteness. He was a constructive statesman and would be famous for longevity.

But the sandwich-men swaggered about, realizing that under the leadership of the boss they had won; they had obtained something to which they had no right; by threats of force they had secured food; the boss had made men of them. They therefore crowned Hendrik king. The instinctive and immemorial craving of all men for a father manifests itself—in republics that have forgotten God—in the election of the great promisers and the great confiscators to the supreme power. History records that no dynasty was ever founded except by a man who fought both for and with his followers. The men that merely fought for their fellows have uniformly died by the most noble and inspiring death of all—starvation. Names and posthumous addresses not known.

[Pg 36]

When not a scrap remained on any of the platters, Hendrik called his men to him and told them:

"Meet me at the sign-painter's, corner Twenty-ninth Street and Ninth Avenue next Friday night after seven. We'll be open till midnight. Be sure and bring your boards with you."

"We gotter give 'em up before we can get paid," remonstrated Mulligan. "If we don't we don't eat."

"That's right!" assented a half-dozen.

"*Bring them!*" said Hendrik. The time to check a mutiny is before it begins.

"A' right!" came in a chorus of fourteen heroic voices.

"Beginning next Monday, you'll get twenty cents an hour. I guarantee that to you out of my own pocket. You must each of you bring all the other sandwiches you run across. If necessary, drag them. We must have about one hundred to start, if you want forty beers a day."

"We do! We do!"

"Then bring the others, because we've got to begin with enough men in the union to knock the stuffing out of those who try to scab on us. Get that?"

"Sure thing!" they shouted, with the surprised enthusiasm of men who suddenly understand.

They were deep in misery and accustomed to a poverty so abject that they no longer were capable of even envying the rich. They, therefore, could hate only those who were poorer than themselves—the men who dared to have thirsts that could be assuaged with less than forty beers per day. Not obey the boss, when they already felt an endless stream trickling down their unionized gullets? And not kill the scab whose own non-union thirst would prolong theirs?

[Pg 37]

No! A man owes some things to his fellows, but he owes everything to himself. That is why, for teaching brotherhood, there is nothing like one book: the city Directory, from a fourth-floor window.

When the boss left them he was certain that they would not fail him. Just let them dare try to stay away, after he had so kindly destined them to be the rungs of the ladder on which he expected to climb to his lady's window—and her father's pocket! As he walked away, his confidence in himself showed in his stride so clearly that those who saw him shared that confidence. It is not what they were when they were not leaders, but what they can be when they become leaders, that makes them remarkable men.

[Pg 38]

II

The next morning Hendrik went to his tailor. As he walked into the shop he had the air of a man in whom two new suits a day would not be extravagance. The tailor, unconscious of cause and effect, called him "Mister," against the habit of years. Hendrik nodded coldly and said:

"As secretary and treasurer of the National Street Advertising Men's Association, I've got to have a new frock-coat. Measure me for one."

Hendrik had the air of a man who sees an unpleasant duty ahead, but does not mean to shirk it. This attitude always commands respect from tailors, clergymen, and users of false weights and measures.

"Left the bank?" asked the tailor, uncertainly.

"I should say I had," answered Hendrik, emphatically.

"What is the new job, anyhow?" asked the tailor, professionally. His customers usually told him their business, their history, and their hopes. By listening he had been able to invest in real estate.

"As I was about to say when you *interrupted* me"—Hendrik spoke rebukingly.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Rutgers," said the tailor, and blushed. He knew now he should have said "position" instead of "job." The civilization of to-day—including sanitary plumbing—is possible because price-tags were invented. This is not an epigram.

[Pg 39]

"—the clothes must be finished by Thursday. If you can't do it, I'll go somewhere else."

"Oh, we can do it, all right, Mr. Rutgers."

"Good morning," and Hendrik strode haughtily from the shop.

To the tailor Hendrik had always been a clerk at a bank. But now it was plain to see that Mr. Rutgers thought well of himself, as a man with money always does in all Christian countries. Hendrik's credit at once jumped into the A1 class. Some people and all tailors judge men by their backs.

Being sure of the guests, Hendrik Rutgers went forth in search of their dinner. To feed fivescore starving fellow-men was a noble deed; to feed them at the expense of some one else was even higher. So, dressed in his frock-coat, wearing his high hat as though it was a crown, he sought Caspar Weinpusslacher. The owner of the "Colossal Restaurant," just off the Bowery, gave a square meal for a quarter of a dollar, twenty-five cents; for thirty cents he gave the same meal with a paper napkin and the privilege of repeating the potato or the pie. His kitchen organization was perfect. His cooks and scullions had served in the German army in similar capacities, and he ruled them like one born and brought up in the General Staff. His waiters also were recruited from the greatest training-school for waiters in the world. He operated on a system approved by an efficiency expert. By giving low wages to people who were glad to get them, paying cash for his supplies and judiciously selecting the latter just on the eve of their spoiling, he was able to give an astonishingly good meal for the money. His profits, however, depended upon his selling his entire output. This did not always happen. Some days Herr Weinpusslacher almost lost three dollars.

[Pg 40]

No system is perfect. Otherwise hotel men would wish to live for ever.

Hendrik stalked into the Colossal dining-room and snarled at one of the waiters:

"Where's your boss?"

The waiter knew it couldn't be the Kaiser, or a millionaire. It must therefore be a walking delegate. He deferentially pointed to a short, fat man by the bar.

"Tell him to come here," said Rutgers, and sat down at a table. It isn't so much in knowing whom to order about, but in acquiring the habit of ordering everybody about, that wins.

Caspar Weinpusslacher received the message, walked toward the table and signaled to a Herculean waiter, who unobtrusively drew near—and in the rear—of H. Rutgers.

Hendrik pointed commandingly to a chair across the table. C. Weinpusslacher obeyed. The Herculean waiter, to account for his proximity, flicked non-existent crumbs on the napeless surface of the table.

"Recklar tinner?" he queried, in his best Delmonico.

"*Geht-weg!*" snarled Mr. Rutgers. The waiter, a nostalgic look in his big blue eyes, went away. *Ach*, to be treated like a dog! *Ach*, the Fatherland! And the officers! *Ach!*

"Weinpusslacher," said Rutgers, irascibly, "who is your lawyer and what's his address?"

C. Weinpusslacher's little pig-eyes gleamed apprehensively.

"For why you wish to know?" he said.

"Don't ask *me* questions. Isn't he your friend?"

"Sure."

[Pg 41]

"Is he smart?"

"Smart?" C. Weinpuschlacher laughed now, fatly. "He's too smart for *you*, all right. He's Max Ondemacher, 397 Bowery. I guess if you—"

"All right. I'm going to bring him to lunch here."

"He wouldn't lunch here. He's got money," said C. Weinpuschlacher, proudly.

"He will come." Rutgers looked, in a frozen way, at Caspar Weinpuschlacher, and continued, icily: "I am the secretary and treasurer of the *National Street Advertising Men's Association*. If I told you I wanted *you* to give *me* money you'd believe me. But if I told you *I* wanted to give *you* money, you wouldn't. So I am going to let your own lawyer tell you to do as I say. I'll make you rich—for nothing!"

And Hendrik Rutgers walked calmly out of the Colossal Restaurant, leaving in the eyes of C. Weinpuschlacher astonishment, in the mind respect, and in the heart vague hope.

This is the now historic document which Hendrik Rutgers dictated in Max Onthemaker's office:

Hendrik Rutgers, secretary and treasurer of the National Street Advertising Men's Association, agrees to make Caspar Weinpuschlacher's Colossal Restaurant famous by means of articles in the leading newspapers in New York City. For these services Hendrik Rutgers shall receive from said Caspar Weinpuschlacher, proprietor of said Colossal Restaurant, one-tenth (1/10) of the advertising value of such newspaper notices—said value to be left to a jury composed of the advertising managers of the *Ladies Home Journal*, the *Jewish Daily Forward*, and the *New York Evening Post*, and of Max Onthemaker and Hendrik Rutgers. It is further stipulated that such compensation is to be paid to Hendrik Rutgers, not in cash, but in tickets for meals in said Colossal Restaurant, at thirty cents per meal, said meal-tickets to be used by said Hendrik Rutgers to secure still more desirable publicity by feeding law-abiding, respectable poor people.

[Pg 42]

Panem et circenses! He had made sure of the first! The public could always be depended upon to furnish the second by being perfectly natural.

M. Onthemaker accompanied H. Rutgers to the Colossal. He had some difficulty in persuading C. Weinpuschlacher to sign. But as soon as it was done Hendrik said:

"First gun: The National Street Advertising Men will hold their annual dinner here next Saturday, about one hundred of us, thirty cents each; regular dinner. *That* is legitimate news and will be printed as such. It will advertise the Colossal and the Colossal thirty-cent dinner. You won't be out a cent. We pay cash for our dinner. I'll supply a few decorations; all you'll have to do is to hang them from that corner to this. You might also arrange to have a little extra illumination in front of the place. Have a couple of men in evening clothes and high hats on the corner, pointing to the Colossal, and saying: '*Weinpuschlacher's Colossal Restaurant! Three doors down. Just follow the crowd!*' Arrange for all these things so that when you see that I am delivering the goods you won't be paralyzed. Another thing: There will be reporters from every daily paper in the city here Saturday night. Provide a table for them and pay especial attention to both dinner and drinks. *They* will make you famous and rich, because you will tell them that they are getting the regular thirty-cent dinner. It will be up to you to be intelligently generous now so that you may with impunity be intelligently stingy later, when you are rich. I advise you to have Max here, because you seem to be of the distrustful nature of most damned fools and therefore must make your money in spite of yourself. Next Saturday at six P.M.! You'll make at least two hundred thousand dollars in the next five years. Now I am going to eat. Come on, Onthemaker."

[Pg 43]

H. Rutgers sat down, summoned the Herculean waiter, and ordered two thirty-cent dinners.

C. Weinpuschlacher, a dazed look in his eyes, approached Max and whispered, "Hey, dot's a smart feller. What?"

"Well," answered M. Onthemaker, lawyer-like, "you haven't anything to lose."

"You said I should sign the paper," Caspar reminded him, accusingly.

"You're all right so long as you don't give him a cent unless I say so."

"I won't; not even if you say so."

With thirty cents of food and thirty millions of confidence under his waistcoat, Hendrik Rutgers walked from the Colossal Restaurant down the Bowery and Center Street to the City Hall. At the door of the Mayor's room he fixed the doorkeeper with his stern eye and requested his Honor to be informed that the secretary of the National Street Advertising Men's Association would like to see his Honor about the annual dinner of the association, of which his Honor had been duly informed.

One of the Mayor's secretaries came out, a tall young man who, as a reporter on a sensational newspaper, had acquired a habit of dodging curses and kicks. Now, as Mayor's secretary, he

didn't quite know how to dodge soft soap and glad hands.

"Good afternoon," said Hendrik, with what might be called a business-like amiability. "Will the Mayor accept?" [Pg 44]

"The Mayor," said the secretary with an amazing mixture of condescension and uneasiness, as of a man calling on a poor friend in whose parlor there is shabby furniture but in whose cellar there is a ton of dynamite—"the Mayor knows nothing about your asso—of the *dinner* of your association." The secretary looked pleased at having caught himself in time.

"Why, I wrote," began H. Rutgers, with annoyance, "over a week—" He silenced himself while he opened his frock-coat, tilted back his high hat from a corrugated brow, and felt in his pocket. It is the delivery, not the speech, that distinguishes the great artist. Otherwise writers would be considered intelligent people.

"Hell!" exclaimed Hendrik, looking at the secretary so fixedly and angrily that the ex-reporter flinched. "It's in the other coat. I mean the copy of the letter I sent the Mayor exactly a week ago to-day. I wondered why he hadn't answered."

"He never got it," the secretary hastened to say.

Hendrik laughed. "You must excuse my language; but you know what it is to arrange all the details of an annual meeting and banquet—menu, decorations, music, *and* speeches. Well, here is the situation: the annual dinner of the National Street Advertising Men's Association will be held at Weinpuslacher's. Reception at six; dinner at eight; speeches begin about ten.

"What day?" asked the secretary.

"My head is in a whirl, and I don't— Let me see— Oh yes. Next Saturday, April twenty-ninth. I'll send you tickets. Do you think the Mayor will come?" [Pg 45]

"I don't know. Saturdays he goes to his farm in Hartsdale."

"Yes, I know; but couldn't *you* induce him to come? By George! there is nothing our association wouldn't do for you in return."

"I'll see," promised the secretary, with a far-away look in his eyes as if he were devising ways and means. Oh, he earned his salary, even if he was a Celt.

"Thank you. And— Oh yes, by the way, some of our members will arrive at the Grand Central Station Saturday afternoon. Any objections to our marching with a band of music down the avenue to the Colossal? We'll wear our association badges; they are hummers." He felt in his coat-tails. "I wish I had some with me. Is it necessary to have a permit to parade?"

"Yes; but there will be no trouble about that."

"Oh, thanks. Will you fix that for us? I've got to go to Wall Street after one of the bankers on the list of speakers, and I'll be back in about an hour. Could I have the Mayor's acceptance and the permit to parade then? You see, it's only a couple of days and I hate to trust the mail. Thank you. It's very kind of you, and we appreciate it."

The secretary pulled out a letter and a pencil from his pocket as if to make a note on the back of the envelope, and so Hendrik Rutgers dictated:

"*The National Street Advertising Men's Association*. Altogether about one hundred and fifty members and one band of music. So long, and thank you very much, Mr.—er—"

"McDevitt.

"Mr. McDevitt. I'll return in about an hour from now, if I may. Thank you." And he bowed himself out.

Hendrik Rutgers had spoken as a man speaks who has a train to catch that he mustn't miss. That will command respect where an appeal in the name of the Deity will insure a swift kick. Republics! [Pg 46]

In an hour he was back, knowing that the Mayor had gone. He sent in for Mr. McDevitt. The secretary appeared.

"Did he say he'd come?" asked H. Rutgers, impetuously.

"I am sorry to say the Mayor has a previous engagement that makes it absolutely impossible for him to be present at your dinner. I've got a letter of regret."

"They'll be awfully disappointed, too. I'll get the blame, of course. *Of course!*" Mr. Rutgers spoke with a sort of bitter gloom, spiced with vindictiveness.

"Here it is. I had him sign it. I wrote it. It's one of those letters," went on the secretary, inflated with the pride of authorship, "that can be read at any meeting. It contains a dissertation on the beneficent influence of advertising, strengthened by citations from Epictetus, Buddha, George Francis Train, and other great moral teachers of this administration."

"Thank you very much. I appreciate it. But, say, what's the matter with you coming in his place? I don't mean to be disrespectful, but I have a hunch that when it comes to slinging after-dinner

oratory you'd do a great deal better."

"Oh," said McDevitt, with a loyal shake of negation and a smile of assent. "No, I couldn't."

"I'm sure—"

"And then I'm going to Philadelphia on Saturday morning to stay over Sunday. I wish you'd asked me earlier."

[Pg 47]

"So do I," murmured H. Rutgers, with conviction and despair judiciously admixed.

The secretary had meant to quiz H. Rutgers about the association, but H. Rutgers's manner and words disarmed suspicion. It was not that H. Rutgers always bluffed, but that he always bluffed as he did, that makes his subsequent career one of the most interesting chapters of our political history.

"And here's the permit," said the secretary.

H. Rutgers, without looking at it, put it in his pocket as if it were all a matter of course. It strengthened the secretary's belief that non-suspiciousness was justified.

"Thanks, very much," said H. Rutgers. "I am, I still repeat, very sorry that neither you nor the Mayor can come." He paid to the Mayor's eloquent secretary the tribute of a military salute and left the room.

[Pg 48]

III

The union of the sandwich-men was an assured success. Victory had come to H. Rutgers by the intelligent use of brains. The possession of brains is one of the facts that can always be confirmed at the source.

Next he arranged for the band. He told the band-master what he wished the band to do. The band-master thereupon told him the price.

"Friend," said H. Rutgers, pleasantly, "I do not deal in dreams either as buyer or seller. That's the asking price. Now, how much will you take?" Not having any money, Hendrik added, impressively, "Cash!"

The band-master, being a native-born, repeated the price—unchanged. But he was no match for H. Rutgers, who took a card from his pocket, looked at what the band-master imagined was a list of addresses of other bands, and then said, "Let me see; from here to—" He pulled out his watch and muttered to himself, but audible by the band-master, "It will take me half an hour or more."

H. Rutgers closed his watch with a sharp and angry snap and then determinedly named a sum exactly two-thirds of what the band-master had fixed as the irreducible minimum. It was more than Hendrik could possibly pay.

[Pg 49]

The band-master shook his head, so H. Rutgers said, irascibly:

"For Heaven's sake, quit talking. I'm nearly crazy with the arrangements. Do you think you're the only band in New York or that I never hired one before? Here's the Mayor's permit." He showed it to the musical director, who was thereby enabled to see *National Street Advertising Men's Association*, and went on: "Now be at Grand Central Station, Lexington Avenue entrance, at 3.45 Saturday afternoon. The train gets in at 4. I'll be there before you are. We'll go from the depot to Weinpuslacher's for dinner."

"Of course, we get our dinners," said the band-master in the tone of voice of a man who has surrendered, but denies it to the reporters.

"Yes. You'll be there sure?"

"Yes. But, say, we ought to get—"

"Not a damned cent more," said H. Rutgers, pugnaciously, in order to forestall requests for part payment in advance.

"I wasn't going to ask you for more money, but for a few—"

"Then why waste my time? Don't fail me!"

Then Hendrik Rutgers put the finishing touches on the work of organization. He rented offices in the Allied Arts Building, sent a sign-painter to decorate the ground-glass doors, and ordered some official stationery in a rush. He promised the agent to return with the president and sign the lease.

Where everybody distrusts everybody else there is nothing like promising to sign documents!

He bought some office furniture on exactly the same plan.

On Friday night the unionized sandwich-men took their signs and boards to the trysting-place, [Pg 50]

Twenty-ninth Street and Ninth Avenue, to have new advertisements of Hendrik's composition painted thereon. The boards did not belong to the members, but in a good cause all property is the cause's. Each of the original fourteen brought recruits. The street was almost blocked. The two sign-painters worked like nine beavers, and Hendrik and the young man in steel-rimmed spectacles helped. When the clamor became threatening Hendrik counted his men twice, aloud. There were eighty-four of them. They knew it was eighty-four, having heard him say it, as he intended they should. He then took them to the corner boozery.

He had only two dollars. There were eighty-four thirsty. Therefore, "Eighty beers!" he yelled, majestically.

"*Eighty-four!*" shouted eighty-four voices.

"That's twenty cents more," said Hendrik to himself in the plain hearing of the hitherto distrustful bartender. He had a small green roll in his left hand consisting of two dollars and two clippings. With his right he loudly planked down two large dimes on the counter and shoved them toward the bartender, who took them while Hendrik began to count his greenbacks.

The bartender saw the exact change and began to draw beer. He even yelled for assistance.

Hendrik knew better than to enforce discipline now, but he could not officially countenance disorder.

"Give the other fellows a chance," he said, paternally, to those near by. Then he saw the rear entrance. It inspired him.

He waited until there were about sixty glasses on the bar. Then he yelled in the direction of the front door: "Come in, boys! Everybody gets one!"

[Pg 51]

The tidal-wave carried him and twenty others to the end of the room. But while the twenty others fought to get back to the schooners, he intelligently went out by the back door.

The police reserves were called. They responded. Then six ambulances.

Those who survived sought Hendrik to complain, but he beat them to it by scolding them angrily. He all but licked them on the spot, so that they forgot their grievance in their haste to defend themselves. He then divided them into squads of five and took them to another saloon—one squad and a quarter of a dollar at a time. He only used one dollar and fifty cents cash that way.

He then promised all of them forty beers a day beginning on Monday. He told them to get recruits, who would not be admitted to the union, but could have the privilege of parading. They must be thirsty men and look it. They would receive two beers apiece.

On Saturday morning there was not a sandwich-man to be seen at work in Greater New York.

At noon the city editors of all the metropolitan dailies received neatly typewritten notices that the sandwich-men had formed a union and would "peacefully strive for higher wages, shorter hours, and reduced peregrinations. The sandwich-men had no desire to precipitate another internecine strife between Labor and Capital." They were "willing to submit their differences to a board of arbitration consisting of John D. Rockefeller, Charles F. Murphy, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Hendrik Rutgers."

These notices were one and all thrown into waste-paper baskets as cheap humor—to be dug up later and used.

[Pg 52]

IV

On Saturday afternoon at 3.35 the Harlem contingent, carrying their armor under one arm, their tickets given into the conductor's own hand by the lieutenant, Fleming, entrained at the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street station of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad.

Ten minutes later they arrived at the Grand Central Station. And as the first pair of sandwiches descended, the waiting band burst into a joyous welcome.

The exits were crowded. Martial music and parading men always draw crowds. So long as there is no charge, gaping audiences automatically supply themselves in New York.

And so, along Forty-second Street, following the musicians, himself followed by his starving sandwiches, Hendrik Rutgers walked into Fifth Avenue and into history at one and the same time.

The procession turned southward. The band played Chopin's "Funeral March." Hendrik Rutgers at the head of his pauperized cohorts, anger in his heart, light in his soul, defiance in his eyes, marched down Fifth Avenue with an effect as of a man in armor treading on prostrate millionaires as over so many railroad-ties. Men who had money in their pockets for a minute felt the wind squeezed out of them by his foot. And as they saw the led sandwiches they looked thoughtful.

[Pg 53]

The first of Rutgers's infantry was an old man. His long, gray beard was dirty and ragged, like his clothes and the rest of him. In his eyes you saw the unutterable weariness of a man who has lived

fifty suffering years too long. Underneath his eyes were dark rings; from the sidewalk his sockets looked finger-deep. On his cheeks was the pallor of death.

H. Rutgers, fighting for fairness and justice, had justly picked out the old fellow to be his Exhibit "A." Society must see what it did to human beings! Therefore the old man slid one foot along the asphalt and let the other follow it, with a spent, mechanical movement, as an engine, after the power is turned off, keeps on going from the momentum of years. The legs seemed to move from force of habit—a corpse on foot, with a concealed galvanic battery somewhere.

And on the breastplate and backplate of this armored corpse, printed in funereal black, beautiful women and intellectual men on Fifth Avenue, where the unforgivable crime is to be poor and show it, read:

Yesterday I walked 19 miles.

They paid me 35 cents cash

And 2 meal tickets.

He had been well coached as to his gait and, thrilled by the success he was making, the old chap became an artist and limped worse.

Behind him was our friend Mulligan, pale, thin to emaciation. He looked famished. It came from the possession of a tapeworm, as before stated. To him Hendrik Rutgers had given this standard to bear:

[Pg 54]

They call us Sandwich-men because:

We don't know what a Square Meal is!

He was followed by the raggedest human being that Anthony Comstock ever allowed to exhibit himself in public. On his boards the Fifth Avenue crowd on this fair spring day saw this:

Do you thank God you are alive?

So do we!

And notice the DIFFERENCE!

The shabby-genteel man, ex-Republican, with steel-rimmed spectacles, who now looked for all the world like a bookkeeper out of a job, had this:

I am the Result.

The Cause was not Drink.

It was HUNGER.

A young fellow who looked so much as if he had just left a hospital that thousands of spectators imagined they smelled iodoform carried this:

[Pg 55]

All men must die.

Knowing this, WE HOPE!

An octogenarian, not over four and one-half feet tall, very frail-looking, was next. To him H. Rutgers had assigned this banner:

If Society won't feed us

We'll feed the Society of Worms—

POTTER'S FIELD

Under a big foot—property of a popular chiropodist on lower Broadway; terms twenty-five cents per, five for a dollar—was this:

We are the World's Unfortunates:

BORN TO BE KICKED!

Then followed a haggard-faced man who looked like an exaggerated picture of poverty. He

carried:

There are poorer than we.

HELP THEM!

A man with the stride of a conqueror bore a banner:

[Pg 56]

AND STILL WE BELIEVE IN GOD!

The crowd looked puzzled. What the dickens did believing in God have to do with anything? To end the bother of thinking they looked at the next one.

Look at Fifth Avenue!

WHY?

See what we are!

WHY?

They obeyed. They saw Fifth Avenue. Why? They did not know why. And then they saw what the sandwich-men were. And they wondered why the sandwich-men asked why. Why not? Pshaw! The placard that followed was:

If you wish to see

One hundred starving men

Follow us.

YOU WILL REMEMBER IT!

Say, that was something that nobody had seen and therefore everybody could joke about. Every woman had the same remark and the same grin: "Haven't I seen my husband?" [Pg 57]

Before the parade had gone half a square Fifth Avenue was blocked. Apart from the interference of the band and the sandwiches with vehicular traffic, there was the paralysis of the pedestrians. The Peacock Parade halted. Slim figures, half-naked, flat-bosomed, stalked swayingly to the curb and stared with eyes in which was the insolent sex challenge that New York males answer with furs and jewels. And as they looked the challenge of sex died in the eyes of the women: the marchers had no sex; anybody could see they had no money!

And the men, too, ceased to look stallion-eyed at the women and gazed on the parade of sandwich-men, who, in the middle of the street, with the machines and the horses, slouched on—almost rubbing valuable varnish on automobiles and carriages, careless beasts!

Presently the hurrying crowds slowed their gait and kept step to Chopin's dirge—*slowly! slowly!*—until all Fifth Avenue was a vast funeral procession; only the marchers could not have told you what it was that long since had died of gold on Fifth Avenue! Slowly! Slowly! And with the funereal gait other changes came—in the grimace of the over-red lips and the look of the over-bold eyes. But never the slightest change in the color of the cheeks, which was there to stay, in rain, shine, or snow.

"What is it? What is it?" whispered ten thousand people. [Pg 58]

From the middle of the street it sounded like the whimper of ten thousand little foamy waves dying on a flat beach. It made the filthy bipeds who marched look at the thronged sidewalks.

They saw the usual Fifth Avenue crowd. They saw the full-fed, clock-hating faces of professional idlers; the drawn features of the busy money-maker with his perennial anxieties; the suddenly immobilized grimaces of millionaires intended to conceal the fear of God knew what; the contemptuous countenances of waiters from fashionable restaurants, who, like ordained priests, knew America at its worst, but, unlike priests, could not pity; healthy American boys with clean faces and the eyes of animals.

And the sexless marchers saw also healthy American girls with delicate features and dreadful, price-quoting eyes, and faces not clean and healthy, but dead-white and dead-crimson; they saw not women's faces, but marble tombstones on which the epitaphs were scarlet letters that told what the price was, so that the professional prostitutes no longer wasted time advertising with the same ink, but used downcast eyes as bait.

There was a gap of about thirty feet between the first detachment of Rutgers's marching advertisements and the next. The spectators, seeking explanations, saw a cadaverous-looking man, hollow-cheeked, sunken-eyed, white-lipped, who stepped as though the avenue were full of

puddles of nitroglycerine—uncertainly, fearfully! And this death-on-foot carried a white-cloth board black-bordered like a funeral-card. And thereon money-makers and money-spenders, clubmen and waiters, shop-girls and millionairesses—all Fifth Avenue!—saw this:

[Pg 59]

HAIL, NEW YORK!

WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE

SALUTE YOU!

There followed another gap of thirty feet, so that the valedictorian of the doomed might be seen of all. Then came eighty-odd sandwich-bearers, appositely legended. From time to time the valedictorian would stagger as you have seen horses do on their last trip to the glue-factory. Whereupon a couple of the non-descripts behind him would shuffle up and endeavor to uphold him. And the others slouched on, deep-eyed, gaunt, famine-stricken, rum-ravaged, disease-smitten—ex-bookkeepers, and superannuated mechanics, and disgraced yeggmen, and former merchants—and former men, too!

At Thirty-ninth Street a young woman dressed richly but in perfect taste stood on the very corner. Her hair had glints of sunshine and her eyes were like twin heavens, clean, and clear, and blue, and infinitely deep. And the Madonna face saw the Death face, looked at the thing that had been a man, and read his salutation. And in one of the pauses of the "Funeral March" a thousand people heard her laugh, and heard her exclaim with a contagious relish, spiced with undisguised admiration:

"If that ain't the limit!"

New York had spoken!

And the chauffeurs near her laughed in sympathy. And gray heads stuck out of limousine windows, and millionaires and their female stood up in their snail-moving touring-cars, and top-hatted coachmen turned impassive heads on neck-hinges long since rusted with the arrogance of menials. And upon their faces and along the ranks that lined both sides of the great avenue a slow grin spread—uncertain, hesitating, dubious! The great American sense of humor was trying to assert itself. Hendrik's joke was not labeled "Joke" plainly enough. Otherwise the spectators would have shown much earlier their ability to laugh at death, hunger, disease, misery, drunkenness, honesty, despair—anything, so long as it was the death, hunger, disease, misery, drunkenness, honesty, and despair of others.

[Pg 60]

But at Tiffany's corner the traffic policeman stopped the leader of the band; and he stopped the band; and the band stopped Rutgers; and Rutgers stopped his army; and that stopped all traffic on the Avenue up to Forty-second Street.

Hendrik Rutgers hurried forward and explained, calmly: "Here, officer. I am the secretary of the National Street Advertising Men's Association. We have a permit from the Mayor. Here it is."

"Oh, advertising! I see!" said the policeman, and smiled appreciatively. He had feared they might be starving men.

"Yes," said H. Rutgers, quite loudly, "advertising the fact that a man out of a job in New York, who is too proud to beg and too honest to steal, has to become a sandwich-man and make from twenty-five to forty-five cents for ten hours work—not in China or Mexico, but in New York, today; men who are willing to work, but are old or sickly or have no regular trade. You know how the Mayor feels about the rights of citizens who are not rich and the duty of paid officials of this city. He and I are opposed to too much law in the way of clubs. So kindly pass the word down the line, officer."

[Pg 61]

The big traffic policeman, far more impressed by the delivery than by the speech itself, touched his hand to his cap so very respectfully that the grinning crowd at once became serious. Each woman turned on her neighbor and frowned furiously the unuttered scolding for the other's unseemly levity.

"What does it mean?" asked hundreds. All looked toward Hendrik Rutgers for explanation, for official permission to laugh at a spectacle that was not without humorous suggestions. But he kept them guessing. This is called knowledge of stage effects; also psychological insight; also cheap politics. Historians even refer to it as statesmanship.

Something that makes one hundred thousand New-Yorkers gasp and stare is not necessarily news; an ingenious street-sign or a five-dollar-a-day Steeple Jack could do it. But that not one of one hundred thousand omniscient New-Yorkers knew whether to laugh, to curse, or to weep at what they saw made that sight very decidedly "news." An interrogation marker in one hundred thousand otherwise empty heads loomed gigantic before the hair-trigger minds of the city editors. They sent their star men to get answers to the multitudinous question; and, if possible, also the facts.

Just south of Thirty-fourth Street the *Herald*, *Times*, *Sun*, and *Evening Journal* reporters overtook H. Rutgers. He made the procession halt. That again made all Fifth Avenue halt. He waited until all the reporters were near him, and then he spoke very slowly, for he guessed that shorthand

"The sandwich-men have formed a union. It includes sandwich-men from the five boroughs. We are going to have an annual dinner at six o'clock—we are not fashionable folk, you know. There will be speeches. Did you ask why we should have a union? I'll tell you why: because we didn't have one; because employers have not thought of us as human beings, but as human derelicts. A starving man who doesn't want to steal and is ashamed to beg will sandwich for thirty cents a day ten hours; and he can't always collect his wages. And who is going to fight for him? When you think of the importance of all advertising, do you consider the peculiar picturesqueness of advertising through sandwiches? In the Middle Ages they had their heralds and their pursuivants—the sandwich-men of feudalism; and later the town criers; and later still, *us*. Do you know in what esteem sandwich-men are held in the south of France and in the Orient? Did you know that sandwich-men take the place of bells on Good Friday in Moldavia? Do you know why there are no commercial sandwich-men in Russia or in Spain? Did you ever read what Confucius wrote about 'Those men who with letters on their garments dispel the ignorance of buyers,' and a lot more? Did you? Did any clergyman ever tell you that sandwich-men are, beyond the shadow of a doubt, alluded to twice in the Old and five times in the New Testament? Don't you think that as intelligent investigators of industrial conditions and of the submerged tenth it would be worth your time to come to our annual dinner and hear our version of it? And also see how starving men eat the first square meal of the year?"

Of course it was pure inspiration and, as such, impressive.

[Pg 63]

"Yes, sir," respectfully replied the *Evening Journal* man—a tall, dark chap with gold-rimmed spectacles and a friendly smile. "What's the name of the restaurant?"

"Caspar Weinpusslacher's Colossal Restaurant," said H. Rutgers.

"Spell it!" chorused the reporters; and H. Rutgers did, slowly and patiently. At once the *Evening Journalist* rushed on to telephone the caption of a story to his paper. That would enable the office to get out an extra; after which would come another edition with the story itself. He was the best head-line reporter in all New York.

Long before the National Street Advertising Men's Association reached the Colossal Restaurant, Caspar Weinpusslacher converted himself into a Teutonic hurricane and changed thirty short tables into three, long ones. On his lips was a smile, and in his heart a hope that glowed like an incandescent twenty-dollar gold piece, for Max Onthemaker had rushed in breathlessly and gasped:

"He *is* a smart feller, all right. What?" And he gave an *Evening Journal* to Caspar Weinpusslacher, wherein he read this:

SANDWICH PARADE

PATHETIC PROTEST AGAINST INDUSTRIAL SLAVERY

PAUPERS WHO WILL NEITHER STEAL NOR BEG FORCED BY SOCIETY TO STARVE

SANDWICH WAGES, TWO CENTS AN HOUR

MEN ABOUT TO DIE SALUTE NEW YORK

The Sandwich-men's Union will hold their annual meeting at Weinpusslacher's Colossal Restaurant.

[Pg 64]

They have been saving up for this, their one square meal this year.

They are paid from twenty to forty cents a day and walk from fifteen to thirty miles in the ten hours.

Did you know that twice in the Old and five times in the New Testament mention is made of the sandwich-men?

Do you know why Catholic Spain and anti-Semitic Russia alike permit no sandwich-men to ply their time-honored occupation within their confines?

There the article abruptly ended.

"Weinie," said Max, exultingly, "this makes you. Be very nice to Mr. Rutgers. You'll have to pay him thousands of dollars—"

"Then, you vas in league mit him?"

"No. But he's a genius!"

"I thought he was German," said C. Weinpusslacher, controversially.

"Get busy, Weinie. The crowd will be here in a minute. And don't ask Mr. Rutgers to pay for his dinner."

"Why not?" growled Weinie. He was on his way to a sure million. That made the growl natural.

"What is thirty dollars for their dinner to thirty thousand dollars worth of free advertising?"

"Thirty dollars," observed C. Weinpusslacher, thriftily, "is *thirty dollars!*"

"Bah!"

"I tell you, it is, mister." C. Weinpusslacher frowned pugnaciously.

But Onthemaker knew his man. So he said: "I'll get Meyer Rabinowitz to give us an option on the property to-night before he reads the newspapers. As Rutgers said, once your place is a success, you'll have to pay any price the landlord wants. Meyer's got you! I can hear your squeals of agony already!"

[Pg 65]

Max shook his head so gloomily that C. Weinpusslacher actually began to tremble with joy. The thought of making money did not move him. The thought of losing the money he had not made, did. Oh yes; born money-makers!

By the time H. Rutgers arrived at the Colossal Restaurant Caspar Weinpusslacher, Esq., and the Hon. Maximilian Onthemaker had constituted themselves into a highly enthusiastic reception committee, for the crowd that came with H. Rutgers filled the street so that all you heard was the squealing and cursing of persons that were pressed against iron newel-posts of the old-fashioned stoops or precipitated into basements and cellars. Sixty policemen, impartially cursing the Mayor, Epictetus, and H. Rutgers, and yearning for the days of Aleck Williams, when clubs were made to be used and not to be fined for, endeavored to keep the crowd moving.

"You'll find everything ready, Mr. Rutgers," said M. Onthemaker. "Here is one of my cards. The name, you will see," he almost shouted, "is spelled with a *k* not *h*—O-n-t-h-e-m-a-k-e-r. Everything is ready, Mr. Secretary." He looked at the reporters out of a corner of his eye.

"And it won't cost you nothing, not one cent," interjected C. Weinpusslacher, eagerly and distinctly. "Any feller wot's smart like you, Mr. Rutchers—"

"And the poor starving men," quickly interjected M. Onthemaker, not wishing for character-analyses yet, "who are the victims of a ruthless industrial system—"

[Pg 66]

"Yah, sandwiches!" put in C. Weinpusslacher.

M. Onthemaker grimaced horribly, and C. Weinpusslacher was silent for a minute. Presently he told Rutgers, "They get enough to eat here, anyways, I bet you."

He glared with a sort of malevolent triumph at M. Onthemaker, until he heard the boss say in stern accents:

"That, of course, Weinpusslacher, includes a couple of beers apiece."

"Of course! Of course!" put in M. Onthemaker, hastily. "The representatives of the press will sit at their own table, at which I am to have the honor of presiding, Max Onthemaker—O-n-t-h-e-m—"

"We got it down," the *Evening Journal* man assured him, amiably.

C. Weinpusslacher was so angry that anybody should help him to make money, when half the pleasure is in making it yourself out of your fellow-men, that he said, spitefully, "There will be free beer!"

Hendrik Rutgers took an innkeeper's notion and made of it the most remarkable platform in the history of party government. He said, sternly, "Everything free for free men!"

A grunting murmur ran down the line of derelicts—the inarticulate tribute of great thirst to great leadership. In a hundred pairs of eyes a human hope kindled its fire for the first time in two hundred years!

Great indeed was Hendrik Rutgers!

His faithful sandwiches would go through fire for him! A man who can get free beer for Sahara throats could put out the fire—with more beer.

The boards were hung around the great hall in plain sight of the reporters, who copied the legends, that all America might read. While they were writing, Caspar was hiring thirty extra waiters and turning people away. Hendrik went from man to man, sternly warning that no one must begin to eat until he gave the order. A violation of his order would entail the loss of the dinner and most of the scalp. He also said they must not linger over their victuals, and told them that two extra beers apiece would be awarded to the ten men who finished first.

[Pg 67]

He had made up his mind that the cold and callous world should be told how starving men eat.

What do people who get enough to eat know about starving men?

Nothing!

They impede the world's progress by being content. Human pigs!

In a surprisingly short time one hundred complete dinners were in front of one hundred starving

men. Six bartenders were busy filling schooners—in plain sight of the starving men. But the boss's awful frown held them in check. Each man began to tremble in advance—fearing he might not be one of the ten to win the extra schooners.

The reporters looked at the hundred faces and began to write like mad.

Hendrik rose. There was an awed silence. The reporters stopped writing. One hundred inferior maxillaries began to castanet away like mad. The boss held up a hand. Then he said in measured tones:

"May God be good to us sandwich-men again this year! *Eat!*"

When he said eat, men ate. Don't forget the moral effect of commanding and being obeyed!

They flung themselves on the food like wild beasts, and made animal noises in their throats. They disdained forks, knives, and spoons. They used claws and jaws on meat, coffee, bread, potatoes, soup, or pie whichever was nearest.

[Pg 68]

No man wanted to be the last to finish.

"My God!" exclaimed the *Evening Post* man. "This is absolutely horrible!"

"Pippin!" said the creative artist from the Sun.

All of them would treat it as a Belasco production. That is, they would impart to it all the dignity and importance of a political convention.

At 8 P.M. Hendrik Rutgers, man of destiny, rose to speak. He never even glanced at the reporters. He said, very earnestly, to his tattered cohorts:

"Comrades! Ours is beyond question the only labor union in the United States, and, for all I know, in the entire world, that is not monopolistic in its tendencies. We are individualists because advertising is not a science nor a trade, but an art, and we are artists. When the advertisers' greed saw the artists' hunger, the result was *that!*" He pointed to five score dehumanized faces before him.

"Great!" murmured the *Sun* man.

"Hereafter watch the sandwich-man, and in one corner of the sign look for the union label—a skeleton carrying a coffin, to remind us that no matter what a man is when he is born, he goes to his Maker between boards. In death all men are equal, and in his coffin a man is the Ultimate Sandwich!"

"That's literature!" muttered the serious young man from the *Journal*.

"We refuse to be thieves. Therefore we decline to do any sandwiching for patent medicines, banks, quack cures, fraudulent stores, immoral books, coal-dealers, fake doctors, suburban real estate, bum chiroprudists, or disreputable people of any kind, class, or nature whatsoever. We start with professional ethics, which is where most professions end. We who have been the lowest of the low class that work for their daily bread are now the S. A. S. A.—the Society of American Sandwich Artists. All we ask is permission to live! Our headquarters will be in the Allied Arts Building on Fifth Avenue."

[Pg 69]

His speech had quotable phrases. A country that once cast the biggest vote in its history for the square deal, that makes minions of dollars out of asking you if you see that hump, and from promising to do the rest if you push the button, and boasts of the thorn that made a rose famous, is bound to be governed by phrases. The only exceptions are the Ten Commandments. They are quotable, but not memorable.

All the newspapers spread themselves on that story. In their clubs the managing editors heard their fellow-members talk about the parade, and this made each M. E. telephone to the city editor to play it up. It was too picturesque not to be good reading, and since good reading is always easy writing, both reporters and editorial writers enjoyed themselves. That made them artists instead of wage-earners.

Hendrik Rutgers possessed the same quality of political instinct that nearly made the luckiest man in the world President of the United States. By blindly following it, young Mr. Rutgers jumped into the very heart of a profound truth. And once he landed, the same sublimated sagacity impelled him to stamp with both feet hard. Then, unemotionally perceiving exactly what he had done, he proceeded very carefully to pick out his own philosophical steps, in order to be able later on to prove that he had been coldly logical. Impulsive humanity always distrusts impulsiveness in others. Leaders, therefore, always call them carefully considered plans.

[Pg 70]

In all irreligious countries, as Hendrik Rutgers, astutely arguing backward, told himself, the people who buy, sell, and vote are alive only to To-day and therefore dare not take heed of the Hereafter. This has exalted *news* to the dignity of a sacred commandment.

In such communities success is necessarily a matter of skilful publicity.

Who is the greatest of all press agents, working while you sleep and even when you blunder?

The People!

The front page of the newspaper is therefore the arena of to-day!

To live in that page, all you have to do is to become News.

Once you become News all the king-making reporters of all the nation-making newspapers become your press agents. The public does the rest and pays all salaries.

Thrilled by his discovery, Hendrik called Max Onthemaker to one side and, with the air of a man risking one hundred and two millions of cash, said to him: "I have decided to make you chief counsel of my society. Your services will entitle you to represent me."

Never had man been so lavishly overpaid for breathing since the dawn of historical time. Hendrik went on, still imperial in bounty:

"I have in mind some great things. Every one of them will be worth as much space as the newspapers will give to this dinner. Do you see your chance?"

[Pg 71]

"I can't live on newspaper articles," began Max, elated but dissembling.

"You can die without them. Chronic obscurity; acute starvation," said Hendrik Rutgers in his clinical voice. "I not only do not propose to pay you a cent, but I expect you to pay all necessary expenses out of your privy purse without a murmur—unless said murmur is intended to express your legal opinion and your gratitude. I shall give you an opportunity to represent my society"—you would have sworn he was saying *my regiment*—"in actions involving the most famous names in America."

"For instance?" asked M. Onthemaker, trying to speak skeptically, that his eagerness might not show too plainly.

Hendrik Rutgers named six of the mightiest.

"You're on, Mr. Rutgers," said Max, enthusiastically. "Now, I think—"

"Wait!" interrupted Hendrik, coldly. "Never forget that I am not your press agent. You are mine."

"There will be glory enough to go around," said Max Onthemaker in his police-court voice. "When do we begin?"

"To-morrow."

"Yes, sir. And now—"

"My *now* is your *when*! Your job is to find the legal way of helping the Cause."

"I will!" promised Onthemaker, heartfully. The Cause would be his Cause. He'd fix it so they couldn't leave out his name.

But Hendrik saw the gleam in the lawyer's eye.

That's the worst of all thoughts of self. They invariably are undisguisable.

"The Cause, Onthemaker," said Hendrik, sternly, "is the cause of the Society of American Sandwich Artists. We are not associated to make money for ourselves, but for our employers. This is revolutionary. Moreover, we are not working-men, but artists. Therefore our men not only love their work, but are law-abiding. This will make the employers helpless to retaliate. We shall never do anything without invoking the aid of the law, for I believe that the law will help the poor not less than the rich if properly—"

[Pg 72]

"Advertised," prompted Max. "I get you. In the forum of the people's liberties—the daily papers—is the place to try—"

Hendrik held up a hand. He had chosen the right lawyer. The interpretation of the law depends exclusively upon the tone of voice. All reporters are trained to be judges of elocution. They have to be, in republics.

"To-morrow—" Here Hendrik paused.

Max's face paled slightly as he waited. What was coming?

Hendrik finished: "*I shall telephone to you!*"

Max drew in his breath sharply.

Hendrik then nodded. It meant, "You have my permission to retire!"

"Thank you, Mr. Rutgers," said Max, respectfully, and withdrew from the presence on tiptoe.

Hendrik then beckoned to his sandwich lieutenant. "Fleming!" he said, sternly.

Fleming threw up an arm defensively from force of habit—the slave's immemorial salute. Then he grinned sheepishly. Then he said, eagerly, "Yes, boss!"

"I'm going to make you chief of the Meal Ticket Department, and I expect you to maintain discipline. But if I ever hear of any graft, such as accepting bonuses—" He closed his jaws and his fists. When you close both at the same time you inevitably win the debate. It is, however, difficult.

[Pg 73]

"Honest, b-boss," stammered Fleming, his eyes on Hendrik's right fist. "Honest, I—"

The boss's right unclenched itself. Fleming drew in a deep breath.

"Get the names and addresses of all the men here—in their own writing. Ask Onthemaker for a blank-book, and when the men have signed give the book back to him. They've got to sign!"

Fleming's face was pale but resigned. Signatures are lethal weapons in all industrial democracies. Ask the note-teller in any bank. But the boss had said, "*Sign!*"

Kismet!

"And you keep a book of your own so that when I want ten or twenty men of a certain type and appearance you will know where to find them. I hold you responsible!"

Poor Fleming almost collapsed. Responsibility in a republic really means accountability. Our entire system of law, as a great psychologist has pointed out, is based upon the same confusion of definitions.

Hendrik saw the fear of statutory punishment seep into his lieutenant's soul. He stopped it at exactly the right point.

"Fleming," he said, kindly, "I trust you!"

Fleming felt himself decorated with the Grand Cross of the Order of Unearned Food. It made him into an active citizen.

"I'll get the men when you shout, boss!" he promised, proudly, realizing the meaning of the duty of a voter.

However, it would never do to have your creatures think they also have the power to create. [Pg 74]
Therefore Hendrik said, "If you don't—"

"I'll get 'em for you, b-boss. Honest, I will!" meekly promised Fleming, taking his place in the ranks. He was an ideal cabinet officer.

Hendrik Rutgers did not *know* men. He *guessed* them. He thus saved himself the fatigue of thinking.

Weinpusslacher swaggered by, counting his millions. He had begun to feel haughty. Hendrik stopped him by lifting his right forefinger and then smartly moving it Hendrikward.

"Weinie, I guess you're famous. You give the free meal tickets to Onthemaker. And don't try to cheat!"

"I never do such—" began Caspar, angrily.

"You never will to me," interrupted Hendrik, making Weinie's unuttered words his own. It took away from Weinie all sense of proprietorship in his own property.

This also is called genius. Such men should be tax-collectors instead of railroad bankers.

Hendrik glanced toward the reporters and saw that Mr. Onthemaker was talking to them and looking at him—looking at him both ingratiatingly and proudly. He therefore knew that Max was being quoted by the newspaper men, and the only subject on which they would quote him was Hendrik Rutgers. He also knew that the desire for reflected glory, in all newspaper-reading countries, is so strong that Max would be a great political historian. The best way to blow your own horn is to lend it to an obscure friend.

Hendrik Rutgers left the Colossal Restaurant certain that he was News, and that his job consisted of continuing to be News.

To become News and then to continue to be News a man must be plausible, persistent, and picturesque. [Pg 75]

There was no altitude of success to which he might not climb, provided he lost six-sevenths of his name and mutilated his surname in like degree.

He must become two letters: *H. R.*

He thus would become an immortal during his own lifetime, which was immortality enough for any man who merely wished to acquire fame, wealth, and one wife in his own country.

So brightly lighted was his road that he knew exactly where to plant each foot—in the front page!

He must do it all. Therefore he must make others do the work. But this man who now was a million miles beyond all bank clerks knew exactly *what* he needed, which made it easy for him to know exactly *whom* he needed. This knowledge would establish the basis on which the workers must work.

He sought a newspaper-advertising agency; ordered the manager to insert in all the morning papers the same advertisement, in large type, with triple spacing, to show that money was no object.

This always impresses people who wish to make money.

The advertisement read:

WANTED—FIRST-CLASS ADVERTISING CANVASSERS. I AM ANXIOUS TO PAY 50 PER CENT. MORE THAN IS CUSTOMARY TO SUCH MEN. THIS DOES NOT MEAN YOU, MY HUNGRY AND HOPEFUL FRIEND! Apply between 9 and 10 A.M. to

H. R.
ALLIED ARTS BLDG.

P. S. The better the men the fewer I need. The fewer I use the greater the profit to the lucky ones. Keep away unless you are a Wonder.

It was the first time that an advertisement for "Help Wanted" had contained a postscriptum. H. R. did it because he knew that the unusualness of it would make professional people talk. Every experienced advertising man must realize that H. R. had not written an advertisement, but had dictated a brief letter to him. The signer was too busy and too much in earnest to compose a regular advertisement.

[Pg 76]

Genius neglects no opportunity, however slight. Consider the small but efficient yellow-fever microbe.

[Pg 77]

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Monday morning, at 8.30 A.M., H. R. was in his office. At 8.35 he had engaged a stenographer by telephone and told the starter and the elevator-men who H. R. was. Later on the dozen men who answered the advertisement made it impossible for either starter or elevator-men ever to forget who H. R. was without the use of gratuities, profanity, or promises.

H. R.'s first task was to compose memoranda for the use and guidance of Max Onthemaker and Lieutenant Fleming. At 8.45 the first-class advertising canvassers began to appear in numbers. Really efficient men are never modest. Neither are really inefficient men. Efficiency is always a matter of personal judgment. Even efficiency experts will tell you that nobody is really efficient until efficiency experts have said so.

H. R. allowed the applicants to accumulate in the anteroom. The new stenographer had been told to write, "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party" two thousand times and to time herself. The spectators thereby realized that this was a busy office.

He was confronting his first crisis—the selection of a man who must not only be highly competent, but must be made to realize that H. R. was a pioneer, a man to whom tradition, precedents, and custom were less than nothing. H. R. studied the situation and then went out to the anteroom and looked at the waiting dozen slowly.

[Pg 78]

There are a few men in the world who can look a crowd from head to foot and manage to make each man in it feel guilty. After H. R. had so looked at them, he asked, skeptically, "Are *all* of you first-class men?"

To their honor be it said, not one of them answered No. Men collectively may be cruel or blind, but seldom petty or egotistical. Observe mobs.

H. R. turned his back on the crowd and returned to his private office. He did it on purpose. Men usually follow those who act as if they do not care whether they have a following or not. It is wiser to be wrong and not hesitate than to vacillate and be right. Besides, much quicker.

At the threshold he half turned and, without looking at any one in particular, said: "I need only four first-class men. The others might as well go away."

Twelve men heard him. Twelve men followed him.

He sat down at his new desk, put the unpaid bill for same in a drawer, and confronted them.

"Eight of you can go," he observed, and waited.

Each man cast a glance of pity at his neighbor.

"Don't be so modest," H. R. told them, kindly.

"You said first-class men?" politely inquired a young man, smooth-shaven, blond, blue-eyed, and very clean-looking.

"Yes," answered H. R.

"That's what I understood," said the young man, extending his hand. "Barrett's my name."

H. R. ignored the outstretched hand and stared at the clean-looking young man.

[Pg 79]

On the faces of eleven Christian gentlemen came a fraternal look of self-conscious modesty. But young Mr. Barrett, unabashed, said, cheerily:

"Keep on looking. *I* know you want me. When *you* discover it, we'll do business."

"Go to the foot of the class," said H. R., impassively. You could tell nothing from his voice. It is a valuable gift.

The young man eyed H. R. shrewdly, then walked to a corner of the room, sat down, pulled a memorandum-book from his pocket, and began to count his contracts in advance.

"Your *last* name, please," said H. R., looking as if what he had asked for was the *right* name. The assumption of guilt has the effect of putting even the innocent on the defensive. The strategic inferiority of the defensive is always acknowledged by the defeated—even before the defeat.

He jotted down the replies, one after another. Within one and three-quarter minutes these men felt themselves deprived of their individual entities. They had been turned into a list of surnames, a fragment of the rabble.

The leader stood alone—he alone had a *first* name! Smith merely votes; John Smith has his own opinion. H. R. had acted instinctively. He never would have had the conscious wisdom of an editorial writer. There are many editorial writers in all republics. Hence, practical politics.

"Where did you see my advertisement?" asked H. R. "One at a time, please. Also, state why you looked in that particular newspaper?"

They told him, one at a time, in the hearing of the others, thereby intensifying their own feeling of having been lumped into an electorate. He made notes as they answered. Some had seen it in the *Herald*. Others blamed the *World* or the *Times* or the *Sun*, or the *Tribune*. Three gave two papers; one had seen three. They expressed their professional opinion of that particular advertising medium, feeling that said opinion was a qualification of fitness.

[Pg 80]

Young Mr. Barrett from his chair answered: "In all the papers. I also looked in the German, Yiddish, and Italian papers; in the *Courier des Etats-Unis*, and in the first morning edition of every afternoon paper. I did it to get a line on *you*."

H. R. did not look as if he had heard Barrett. He said to the others: "I thank you all for coming. I shall not need Wilson, Streeter, Manley, Hill, Roberts, Smith, Jenks, or MacDuffy."

One of the rejected came forward, scowling. He was naturally a robust-looking person. He said, "Say, this is—"

H. R. did not allow the full expression of individual opinion—a form of salutary discipline which explains why people are governed. He snarled in a tone of voice that made his shoulders look a yard wide: "Mr. Book Agent, I've picked the men I want. What I don't want is to hear any remarks. Talk them into a dictagraph and send the cylinders by parcels post to my secretary."

He had risen. But when he finished speaking, as though the unarmed proletariat were in full retreat, he sat down again. It was the way he did it.

Men always do what they are expected to do. The eight non-successfuls went out. It was only when they were outside, where the female was typewriting away, that they began to talk loudly.

[Pg 81]

H. R. had judged rightly. They were not first-class men. He turned to the others and asked:

"Can you *sell* advertising?"

Young Mr. Barrett came forward. The four answered, "Yes!"

"Then you can sell anything!"

He stood up suddenly, when they were not expecting such a thing. This is always subtly disconcerting. Business men and beautiful women invariably resent it.

He asked, sharply, "What is the one thing none of you can sell to me?"

He looked challengingly at the first. The man stared back at H. R. and, with the canvasser's professional look of congratulation, replied, "A gold brick!"

"Good answer! Not *the* answer. And you?" he asked the second man.

"Newspaper space—not to you."

"Still better answer. But not the answer."

He looked at the third man, who promptly said: "Opinions!"

"Excellent. But not the answer. And you, young man?"

The accusation of youth is never successfully repulsed. Young Mr. Barrett, ingeniously admitting his youth to remove the sting from his humor, replied triumphantly, "Smallpox!"

"The tendency of American youth is toward the clown. It keeps us in an attitude of perennial apology toward the perennial juvenility of our nation. What none of you can sell me is—"

He paused. They were looking at him with the intentness with which all men look at an armed lunatic—or at their master.

[Pg 82]

After the second minute of suspense they exclaimed in chorus:

"What?"

They couldn't help it!

"Cold feet!" said H. R. calmly.

They looked relieved. Then they looked anxious. The reason the ruled masses never win is because they inflict upon themselves their own doubts.

"How many times your own salary do you wish to earn for me?" asked H. R. in the tone of voice in which a philanthropist asks strangers for subscriptions to his pet charity. This always makes people feel that extravagance is a sin.

"I'd expect to earn for you—" began one of the victims.

"Not what you would *expect*, but what you would *like*," corrected H. R. He spoke so kindly that they at once knew it was a trap. A look of brotherhood always is, to all clever men of an editorial type of mind.

"Four or five times," answered No. 1.

"And you?"

"I don't want to work for you at all," answered No. 2, feeling that his answer was sure not to be right.

"Good morning," said H. R. in such a voice and with such a look that No. 2 instantly ceased to exist. When he walked out he didn't hear his own footsteps.

"And you?"

"It depends," answered No. 3 in the earnest voice of a man trying to be fair at all costs, "upon what the work will be."

"I sha'n't need you. Please don't ask me questions. Good day, sir."

"I have a right—"

"None whatever. It would be cruelty if I told you."

[Pg 83]

Mr. Barrett laughed. No. 3 said, angrily, "You can't come that on me and get away with it, you damned—"

"Go while the going is good, friend." H. R. spoke with the cold kindness of a man warning an objectionable inebriate. Then, when the loss of patience of a prize-fighter who, however, has not quite lost sight of the electric chair: "Get out! D'ye *hear*?"

The man left. H. R. stared out of the window. They could see it was to cool off. It gave the remaining pair a great respect for him and also a resolve not to stimulate the heat verbally. At length H. R. turned to No. 1 and said, "Wolverton is your name?"

"Yes," answered Wolverton. Then he added, "Sir."

"Do you always get what you want?"

"I get my share."

"Barrett, do you get what you want?"

"Always!" promptly answered Barrett. "But I've got to be sure I want it."

"The more money you two wish to make the better you please me. It will give you something to brag of. In working for me you will receive your share of prosperity and the pleasure of becoming somebody."

He looked as if the three of them stood in the plain sight of two and one-half millions of spectators. He went on, even more impressively, "You will now go on Fifth Avenue and graciously permit the swellest shops to employ our union sandwich-men to advertise their wares."

Wolverton rose to his feet. His color also rose.

"You didn't want me to waste your time, did you?"

"No, but you have. Good day. Now, Barrett, listen to me. I never repeat."

Mr. Wolverton opened his mouth, perceived that H. R. was not looking at him, closed his mouth and went out. He was a well-dressed man with a determined chin. If it had not been for that chin he would have been a bookkeeper. Determination minus imagination equals stubbornness.

[Pg 84]

Mr. Wolverton therefore walked out unbleeding.

"Barrett, do you see the possibilities?"

"Do I? Didn't I see the parade? Say, I can only think when I talk. Trust *me*! Speaking of terms—" He looked at H. R., nodded amiably, and said, "After you, kind friend."

"You will ask our clients five dollars per day per man, they to pay for the boards, which must be

artistic and approved by me. The union label will be on them. Forty per cent. goes to the artist, forty per cent. to you, and ten per cent. to the society. Don't try Valiquet's. Tackle everybody else first. I'll be here all the afternoon. Barrett, I expect you to do your damndest!"

He rose, shook hands with young Mr. Andrew Barrett, escorted him to the door, and returned to his desk.

He sat there, thinking. He intended Barrett should fail in order that when H. R. made him succeed, later, Barrett should know to whom the credit should go, though the commissions would fall into Barrett's pocket. That would make the young man really useful.

The telephone people had not yet installed the apparatus in his office, so he went downstairs and called up Mr. Maximilian Onthemaker.

"Onthemaker?... This is H. R. speaking.... Of course I saw the papers.... Yes, all of them. Come up to my office. At once!... I can't help it; I need you—this means the front page again. If you don't want the job.... I thought you would! Remember, I'm waiting. Do you hear me? *Waiting!*"

[Pg 85]

The greatest stroke of political genius on the part of Louis XIV. was his rebuke: "I almost have been made to wait!"

What, wait?—H. R.?

If it had not been that taxicabs cost actual money, M. Onthemaker would have taken one. But he knew he soon would have one of his own—if the newspapers did their share.

Before Max could decide whether he ought to say good morning to H. R. in a sulky tone of voice at being called from an important conference, or smile pleasantly, H. R. said:

"Onthemaker, I am going to advertise a shop without permission and without pay."

"Another restaurant, like—"

"Like nothing. Don't interrupt again, not even to approve. I am going to have Valiquet's, the jewelers, brought to the notice of Fifth Avenue through the medium of our sandwich-men. I anticipate objections. The statute clearly says we must not use a person's name for purposes of trade without his consent. But I'm not going to use the name of a person, but of a corporation, *for its own trade and profit*. There is no law that can prevent me from putting money into a corporation's treasury—"

"A commission of lunacy—"

"Be quiet. They can't stop me legally, if you are our counsel." Max bowed, opened his mouth, and promptly closed it when he saw H. R.'s face. "They might try to get out an injunction, but you must beat them to it. They will probably try to get the police to stop us by alleging breach of the peace, disorderly conduct, or some violation of a city ordinance. I want you to prepare in advance restraining orders or applications for injunctions or whatever is needed to prevent interference with us. You are the counsel of the Society of American Sandwich Artists. Prepare papers also in the names of individual members. The poor sandwich artist, working for a mere pittance, without money to pay his able but charitable and indignant counsel, will fight the richest jewelry-shop in the world. The pearl showcase alone would feed one hundred and eighty-six thousand, four hundred and fifty-one men one week. Do you get that?"

[Pg 86]

"Do I?" Max Onthemaker, able and indignant, was rushing to embrace H. R., on whose face he saw ten thousand front-page head-lines, when H. R. said, coldly:

"Sit down. This is only the beginning."

Max sat down. He felt very much more like kneeling in adoration before this god of success.

"Yes, sir," he murmured, prayerfully, and looked with his very soul.

"Be ready with the papers for the papers."

Perceiving a puzzled look on the lawyer's face, H. R. explained: "Draw the legal papers up so they will be news. And remember that *I* am the society. You are merely a lawyer lucky enough to be *its* lawyer. If you don't know what the reporters like to print, bring the injunctions and typewritten argument to me this afternoon. Go away now. I'm going to Valiquet's."

"Not to—"

"Not to anything you may think."

Max Onthemaker walked away, and even as he walked he began to fear that the newspapers would not let him have more than twenty-eight columns. It behooved him to be brief. What with the immemorial wrongs of the poor, and the inalienable rights of American citizens, and the abuse of wealth, and the arrogance of unconvicted millionaires, and the supine subservience of the police and the politicians to Big Business, how could he use less than three pages? How?

[Pg 87]

But he must do it. He asked himself what steps he would take to prevent the sandwich-men, or anybody, from advertising him, and he could find no objection. But he had imagination. He indignantly put himself in the place of Valiquet's and hired M. Onthemaker, Esq., to stop the beasts. And then he proceeded to make the able counsel of the S. A. S. A. punch the great

jewelers' case full of holes—such holes as would let out the law in the way the reporters would like. This would make said holes the kind that no judge, thinking of re-election and the recall, would dare to plug up. When your client is poor and doesn't use dynamite, sympathy is the best law with juries. And when it came to picking out jurors, Max had inherited a vision for dollars which enabled him to tell the contents of a juror's inside pocket to the penny, and therefore the exact hatred of riches of each of the twelve peers.

[Pg 88]

VI

H. R. sent word to Fleming, *via* Caspar Weinpußslacher, that he desired to meet about fifty members of the society at the Colossal Restaurant that evening at seven sharp. He then went to Valiquet's. The firm's name was not visible on the façade; only a beautiful bronze clock. Everybody was expected to know that this was Valiquet's, and everybody did, particularly those who could not afford to buy jewels. It had engendered throughout the entire country that familiar form of American snobbery which consists not only of having the best that money can buy, but of telling everybody that the watch or the necklace or the solitaire or the stick-pin came from Valiquet's.

He entered the most beautiful store in the world as though his feet had carried him thither automatically, from force of habit. He looked approvingly, as for the millionth time, at the wide teak boards of the floor and the ornate but beautiful solid-silver ceiling and the cool variegated purple-gray marble columns. He paused by the pearl-counter and stared at the one-hundred-thousand-dollar strings with what you might call an amiable tolerance; it wasn't their fault, poor things!

He moved on, reluctantly, six feet farther and examined, with a little more insistence, the emeralds, the fashionable gems of the season.

[Pg 89]

"Very fair! Very fair, indeed!" he seemed to be saying encouragingly to the dazzling green things.

The well-trained clerks looked at him, took a respectfully eager step toward him as if to place themselves unreservedly at his orders, and then abruptly immobilized themselves in their tracks—their tribute to expert knowledge!

He did not look up, but, as if he were aware that the world was looking on, ready to obey, he rested his finger-tip on the showcase immediately above an eighteen-carat cabochon emerald surrounded by very white diamonds set in platinum. By instinct he had picked out the best.

A clerk opened the case, took out the emerald, and respectfully laid it before the connoisseur. H. R. fumbled in his waistcoat pockets, then in his coat, allowed himself to look annoyed at having forgotten his pocket magnifying-glass, picked up the jewel, looked at it closely for flaws, then at arm's-length for general effect.

He laid it on the velvet mat, raised his eyes and met the clerk's.

The clerk smiled uncertainly. H. R. unsmilingly raised his eyebrows—very slightly.

"Sixty-eight thousand five hundred, Mr.—eh—"

H. R. hesitated. Then he shook his head resolutely. Having mastered the temptation, he nodded to the clerk, and said, kindly, "Thank you."

"Not at all, sir," gratefully said the clerk.

H. R. walked on, a marked man, high in the estimation of the clerks because he had *not* bought a sixty-eight-thousand-dollar emerald.

Don't you wonder how they do it? What is it? Intuition? Genius?

[Pg 90]

A floor-walker who had taken in H. R.'s introduction of himself to Valiquet's bowed deferentially to H. R. and blamed his memory for not remembering the name. He was certain he knew the gentleman well.

H. R. nodded and asked: "I wish to have a bronze statuette designed and cast for me. Which department, please?"

"Up-stairs, Mr.—er— Second floor, sir. Mr. Gwathmey is in charge, and—"

"Oh, Gwathmey!" H. R. was obviously much relieved.

"Yes, sir. He's still with us, sir. Elevator on the left."

"Thank you," said H. R., and the man smiled gratefully.

You don't have to buy to be treated politely in New York. The mere suspicion of the power of purchase is enough. It is thus that the principle "Politeness pays" has been established among stock-brokers and jewelers.

H. R. was directed to the head of the department, to whom he said, with a sort of boyish

eagerness, "Mr. Gwathmey, I'm very much interested in the Movement, as you probably know, and I wish my little society to have a *very* artistic emblem."

He looked expectantly at Mr. Gwathmey, who thereupon bowed at the implied compliment, but, not knowing what to say, said nothing.

"You read in the papers about the parade my poor fellows had Saturday?"

"Not the—er—sandwich-men's parade?"

"Yes!" H. R. smiled so gratefully and congratulatory that Mr. Gwathmey felt himself enrolled among the honorary vice-presidents. "That's it. The society emblem is a skeleton and the sandwich-boards are a coffin—"

[Pg 91]

"Yes, I read that," and Mr. Gwathmey smiled at the delightful humor of the conceit.

H. R. instantly frowned at the levity—all very rich men frown at all smiles aimed at their pet hobbies.

Mr. Gwathmey, knowing the ways of millionaires, hastened to explain, gravely, "There is a great deal to that idea!"

"Nobody helped me!" H. R. spoke eagerly, as all youthful aristocrats speak when they speak of their own ideas. "The Ultimate Sandwich! What you and I shall be at least once. I am glad you agree with me. Now, I wish statuettes made in bronze in three sizes, two, four, and six inches high, so they can be used by my friends as desk ornaments. And can you put on a nice *patine*?"

"Oh yes! And—er—Mr.—ah—" Gwathmey looked ashamed of himself.

But H. R. smiled pleasantly and said: "It is easy to see you are not a Rutgers College man. I'm Mr. Rutgers. *My* father—" He stopped—naturally.

"I'm sorry to say I'm Harvard, Mr. Rutgers," said Mr. Gwathmey, contritely. "But don't you think it would be a little gruesome for a desk ornament?"

"Not at all. The Egyptians used to bring in a skeleton at their feasts so that the timid guests should cease to fear dyspepsia. And the *Memento Mori* of later centuries had its *raison d'être*. I have a Byzantine ivory carving of a skull that is a gem. Holbein's 'Dance of Death' is not inartistic. It is up to you people to keep my skull from being repulsive. I wish to get something that will drive home the fact to us careless Americans that the richest is no better than the poorest. For we are *not*!" H. R. said this decisively. When the aristocrat tells you that you and he are not a bit better than the proletariat, what you understand him to say is that you also are an aristocrat. A democratic aristocracy is invincible.

[Pg 92]

"No," agreed Mr. Gwathmey, proudly, "we are not!"

"Let me have a sketch as soon as possible. It is to raise funds for our superannuated sandwiches."

Mr. Gwathmey saw no humor in either the intention or the phrase. As an alert business man who studied the psychology of customers, he knew that society leaders had advocated the cause of the shirtwaist workers and of certain educational movies—especially society leaders who had reached the age when their looks and their pearls no longer entitled them to the pictorial supplements. How else could they stay in the newspapers except by indignation over the wrongs of social inferiors? By espousing the cause of the lower classes, the latter also remained lower.

Mr. Gwathmey smiled tolerantly and nodded. Then he looked dreamy and murmured: "I see! I see *exactly* what you want: a skeleton carrying a coffin as sandwich-boards. The Ultimate Sandwich."

He saw it in the air, two feet from the tip of his nose; he was a creative artist. Then he became a salesman.

"We can submit designs to you, Mr. Rutgers—"

"To-day?"

"Oh, gracious, no! We couldn't—"

"To-morrow, then. You have grasped the idea completely. No, Mr. Gwathmey; no!" And H. R. held up a hand—the hand of Fate. "To-morrow, at the latest! Must have it! I hate waiting. That's why I came to Valiquet's instead of Shoreham's. And now," he went on before Mr. Gwathmey could protest, "I wish also a series of designs for sandwich-boards—heraldic shields, scutcheons and bucklers, spade-shapes, rectangular boards of the right proportion, circles, and a keystone for use by the Pennsylvania Railroad. I propose to raise the sandwich to the highest form of art. I shall experiment with various materials—wood, metal, and composition, with raised as well as with sunken letters, in divers colors, vert antique and beautiful soft grays, and iridescent-glass mosaic. Can't you imagine a sandwich being made artistic, if I get competent experts to design them?" H. R. looked anxiously at the competent expert.

[Pg 93]

"Indeed I can," replied Mr. Gwathmey, with conviction. "Indeed I can, Mr. Rutgers. It is an excellent idea!"

"Thank you. Do you know, I thought so, too!"

Mr. Gwathmey, being a kindly man, was so pleased at having suggested, evolved, and improved a great idea that he filled with enthusiasm. Enthusiasm always made him take out his pencil and reach for a pad. He did so now.

"For instance—" he said, and he began to design.

"Exactly! Exactly!" said H. R., with such eager admiration that Mr. Gwathmey was inspired by love of the young man. "I'd give everything I own, Mr. Gwathmey, to have your gift!"

Mr. Gwathmey modestly felt his talents overcapitalized. Everything this eccentric but clever scion of the Knickerbockers owned? Mr. Gwathmey almost saw the old Rutgers farm! It must have had at least one hundred and fifty acres bounded by Broadway, Wall, Fulton, and the East River. A very nice young man, with agricultural ancestors in New Amsterdam.

[Pg 94]

"Won't you give me these, Mr. Gwathmey?" pleaded H. R.

"We never send out such rough—"

"These are not the firm's, but Gwathmey's. Just sign your name and let me keep these as souvenirs. Please!" And H. R. smiled with boyish eagerness.

Mr. Gwathmey signed his initials, and reluctantly gave the drawings to H. R., shaking his modest head deprecatingly.

H. R. reverently put the precious sheets in his pocket and said: "Thank you very much. Now you get your best sculptor to model my Ultimate Sandwich by to-morrow, won't you?" Then he proceeded to contradict in advance—a purely feminine habit, sometimes used with great effect by masculine leaders—"Oh yes, he can. I'm sure *you* can make him do it if you wish to be nice!"

What reply could Mr. Gwathmey possibly make? He made it. "I'll do my best, Mr. Rutgers; but—"

"Then it's done," said H. R., with such conviction that Mr. Gwathmey filled his own lungs with oxygen. "And the designs for the various kinds of sandwich-boards, in color, with the different materials indicated. Send them to me, Allied Arts Building, won't you?"

H. R. forgot to say anything about costs. Only the nobility forget such things, for the nobility know that Valiquet's work is perfect. Mr. Gwathmey therefore forgot to be cautious. He said, "Very well, Mr. Rutgers."

"Thank you so much!" That little phrase of gratitude in that same tone of voice has often made plebeians feel like dying to prove *their* gratitude. Then H. R. hesitated, looked at Mr. Gwathmey, and, recklessly vaulting over all caste-barriers, said, "I wish to shake hands with the man who designed my sandwiches!"

[Pg 95]

Mr. Gwathmey actually blushed as he shook hands warmly. The moment H. R. left, Mr. Gwathmey rushed to his office to take steps to please young Mr. Rutgers.

Rutgers College—culture; Hendrik—Knickerbocker; no question about price—inherited wealth; newspaper front page—somebody!

A nice boy, bless him!

Mr. Gwathmey at that moment was the only man who really knew H. R. Like a book!

Thus are historic characters analyzed by intimate friends. Invaluable testimony! Interesting side-lights!

H. R. went back to his office and began to copy Mr. Gwathmey's designs. He had barely finished when Andrew Barrett entered. He looked humorous. Young men always do when they are angry at having failed but do not wish to call it failure, and therefore must not look angry. Defeat is never a joke. Therefore a joke can never be an acknowledgment of defeat. Very easy! Origin: U. S. A. Reason: national juvenility.

Before Barrett could speak H. R. asked, "Nobody would be first?"

"No; nor second."

"They will. Did you properly play up the wisdom and glory of being first?"

"Of course."

"Go back and tell them that Valiquet's will advertise with our sandwiches as soon as they have prepared artistic boards. The other men have lost the chance to be first. They are asses. Tell them so and book them for second place. Dwell strongly on the fact that the commercial standing of each shop will be determined by the richness of the sandwich-boards. Tell them confidentially that Valiquet's will do some wonderful stunts with real bronze and iridescent-glass mosaics valued at ten thousand dollars. The firm are taking big chances with breakage in a crowded avenue, but that's why they are on top of the heap. The department stores might try real lace edging and gold-thread hand-embroidery on Genoese velvet."

[Pg 96]

Valiquet's advertising campaigns were models of ultra-conservatism and costly refinement. And now, sandwiches!

"Have you—" began young Mr. Barrett in awed tones.

"I have. Get busy! Tell them to watch. On next Monday begins the greatest revolution in advertising this country ever experienced. We are making history! Pledge them to advertise through us, if we deliver the goods. It will be the only swell way. Get that?"

"Betcherlife!" And Mr. Andrew Barrett rushed off.

[Pg 97]

VII

H. R. went out to have his boards made. He distributed orders among wood-carvers and plaster-casting ateliers, and devised a method by which boards could be made on the principle of stereotypers' matrices, only the letters were raised. He pledged the makers to deliver the boards within twenty-four hours, and as he did not haggle over the price by the simple expedient of not asking for it, they promised. When a man is permitted to fix his own profit he will do anything except go to church.

At seven sharp, accompanied by Andrew Barrett, H. R. went to Caspar Weinpusslacher's. He could not get a seat. People stood in dozens, waiting for the early dinner to finish. And most of the waiting customers were fashionably dressed. The Colossal Restaurant had become a fad.

Caspar greeted H. R. with respect. He did not yet feel strong enough to display ingratitude.

"I'll fix a special table, Mr. Rutchers," he said.

H. R. nodded assent and then sought Fleming. At the longest table sat twenty-seven unionized artists.

"Are you getting the full thirty-cent dinner?" he asked, paternally.

"Yes, sir," Fleming hastily assured him.

H. R. looked at his men. They looked away uneasily. Was this to be their last free meal?

[Pg 98]

H. R. turned to Andrew Barrett and said in a voice that did not reach the members and therefore increased their uneasiness:

"Barrett, in unionizing these men, thereby making them free sandwiches, I had in mind several things; one of them was the absolute control of the New York papers."

"How?" asked Barrett in utter non-comprehension.

"By organizing my men into a Public Sentiment Corps. Their duty will be to write letters to the newspapers. I figure that one bona-fide letter to each thirteen thousand one hundred and eighty-six circulation creates an irresistible demand. The *Evening Post*, of course, needs about one to five hundred readers. I think eleven letters will be enough there. Our men already have names, and hereafter they will have permanent addresses."

"And then?"

"I furnish the paper, the stamps, and the literature. The men copy the letters. The newspapers will do the rest. Did you bring the pads and pencils I told you?"

"Yes."

"Pass 'em around, one to each man."

Barrett did so. The men edged away in ill-concealed terror.

"Take up the pencils!" commanded H. R.

The members acted as if the pencils were rattlesnakes.

"Did you hear me?" asked H. R., calmly.

They trembled. But they were not slaves. No man can be compelled to write in a free country.

By feeding these men H. R. had given them the courage to refuse to obey him! Was the food an error, as charitable philosophers have declared?

The pencils remained untouched before the men. Fleming was the only one who obeyed. But he was by now almost a capitalist—he was a distributor of meal-tickets.

[Pg 99]

"Mutiny!" muttered Andrew Barrett, and looked anxiously at his chief. How would H. R. meet this crisis? The absolute control of the New York papers hung in the balance.

But H. R. merely asked, pleasantly, "Ready?"

Not a man stirred. They had forgotten that he could fight!

"I will dictate and each of you must write down what I say. I want to know how well you can write."

Two of the men began to shake their heads with growing independence. Others followed, for

moral courage is contagious, even in industrial democracies.

H. R. smiled confidently. That made them waver. Confidence is the most demoralizing of all social factors. "Now write what I say and sign your name after you finish."

All of them shook their heads and frowned pugnaciously.

H. R. dictated, "*Please pay us five dollars a day!*"

They grabbed the pencils with one lightning-like movement, and wrote, very plainly. They signed their names even more plainly.

"Give them to Fleming. On Monday we begin work. I shall consider the writing carefully."

In this wise was organized the Public Sentiment Corps of the S. A. S. A. Literature, it had once more been demonstrated, is merely a matter of demand and supply.

[Pg 100]

VIII

After dining in the company of Barrett and Caspar Weinpußslacher, H. R. went to the agency that had handled his newspaper advertising, opened a charge account, and told them to send to all the morning papers the following advertisement:

WANTED.—An actor who can look like a gentleman in good health before a critical audience of 250,000. Apply in person, without press notices.

H. R.
Allied Arts Bldg.

It was rather late in the evening when he sent for Max Onthemaker, but this only served to strengthen the learned counsel's high opinion of H. R. When H. R. told him what he proposed to do Max jumped in the air for joy. Then he sat down limply. It suddenly occurred to him that H. R. was far too intelligent. This is fatal to the right kind of newspaper publicity. But H. R. soothed him and dispelled Max's doubts by showing him exactly how to become an efficient and altogether legal *agent provocateur*. The legal mind always concerns itself over the particular paragraph. It comes from numbering the statutes. Max worked till dawn on his papers and arguments.

On the next morning H. R. selected, out of several dozen applicants, four actors who looked really distinguished. The others walked away cursing the trust. They are never original, as a class, by reason of their habit of also reading the press notices of their colleagues.

[Pg 101]

H. R. told the lucky four that he would give them the hardest part of their lives.

They looked at him pityingly.

He then guaranteed to get their pictures in all the papers.

They looked blasé.

He began to speak to them about fame and about money, and then about money and fame—the power to go into any restaurant and cause an instant cessation of all mastication, or walk into any manager's office and be entreated to sign, at any price, only sign—sign at once!

They accepted on the spot, and asked when the engagement began. In their eagerness to be artists they forgot to ask the salary.

H. R. then told them that they must introduce the art of sandwiching to New York. They must command the union sandwiches.

Never!

He explained to them very patiently, for he was dealing with temperaments, that to make sandwiching an art required the highest form of histrionic ability. Anybody could look like a gentleman on the stage or in any of the Fifth Avenue drawing-rooms to which they were obviously accustomed. But, unmistakably to look like a gentleman between sandwich-boards would require a combination of Richard Mansfield and ancient lineage. He asked them kindly to ponder on the lamented Edward VII. How would the Kaiser act? That is the way he wanted his artists to act—like royalty. It was the highest art ever discovered. They would be the cynosure of all eyes on Fifth Avenue, where most eyes belong to wealthy women who always look for, as well as at, handsome men of discretion and bona-fide divorce decrees. The artists themselves would represent Valiquet's, the world's greatest jewelers, and the newspapers would be told of the enormous salaries paid. Some of the boards would be of real gold, to be valued at two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in the most conservative of the newspapers. The men also would be paid in cash, two dollars a day.

[Pg 102]

"The idea is not to sandwich in the ordinary commercial way, but to give our press agents the swellest opportunity of the century. Managers have used real diamonds on the stage. Money buys them. I am using real gentlemen. Money cannot make them. Valiquet's never does anything

inexpensive, and this is merely the first and most dazzling chapter in the history of the New Art of Advertising. The newspapers will duly chronicle the fact that each artist received one thousand dollars a week—which the artists have turned over to charity, like gentlemen. To be the Theodore Roosevelts of street advertisements is more than a privilege, more than an honor, more than art—it is *cash!* There have been sandwich-men. There shall be *sandwich-artists!* Gentlemen, you will make history. If you feel you don't measure up to the job, you can get the hell out of here!"

They not only signed, but begged to begin on that day, even though it was Friday. But H. R. was adamant.

"Monday!" he said, "and no more remarks. Report at nine A.M., dressed like gentlemen."

[Pg 103]

Andrew Barrett reported enthusiastically that nearly every shop on the Avenue was ready to sign contracts if Valiquet's began. There had been some skepticism, and expectations were keyed up to the snapping-pitch.

Mr. Gwathmey sent a dozen designs for boards and the model of the Ultimate Sandwich. It was really a beautiful piece of work. H. R.'s luck was with him. The young Frenchman who did it came into his own years later.

H. R. accepted them on official stationery of the society, ordered one hundred of each size, and also asked that the designs of the sandwich-boards be engraved in color. He told Barrett to get Valiquet's written acceptance of his order.

On Sunday all the newspapers were impressively notified that there would be some novel and revolutionary advertising on the Avenue. To insure attention, the newspapers were simultaneously informed also that the Fifth Avenue Merchants' Guild had decided to advertise more extensively in the daily press. New York would give an object-lesson in optimism and confidence to the rest of the country. This would allay all fears as to the fundamental soundness of the general business situation. Wall Street might be in the dumps, but the legitimate merchants, up to the full-page size, were more truly representative of the metropolis.

Fleming had been told to detail himself, Mulligan, and the four most typical sandwiches in the society to act as the advance-guard. He and the five were at the office early Monday morning, so were the four histrionic artists, so was Max Onthemaker with nineteen injunctions, writs, and legal documents neatly typewritten, three process-servers, and thirty copies of a statement for the newspapers.

[Pg 104]

Each sandwich-man received his board and a copy of his own speech. It was a plea for equal rights and the cessation of hostilities against a poor man simply because he had no money, a prayer for the enforcement of the Constitution, and three quotations from that obsolete Book that taught sandwich-men how to turn the other cheek. Also a post-Scriptural assertion that each man went to church to pray and not to ask for unearned bread or jump on Standard Oil.

Max himself made them memorize the speech. They were letter perfect before he stopped.

"This will kill 'em dead," he said, enthusiastically. "Why, Mr. Rutgers, even the newspapers will think they are Christians and—"

"Make them early Christians," wisely advised H. R. "That's what the world needs to-day!"

"You are right, as usual. Hey, you fellows, add, *If we must die, we die forgiving our fellow-men in the knowledge that after death we shall come into our own.*"

"Hey, I ain't going to be killed just to—" began Mulligan, edging toward the door.

"In the newspapers, ass! In the front page, imbecile!" shrieked Max.

Mulligan shook his head doggedly.

"Mulligan!" said H. R., and clenched his right fist.

"Ye-es, boss."

"I'll be there to see that you get the forty beers and I'll guarantee that you'll have a chance to assuage your thirst *after* business hours."

"All right, boss," said Mulligan. "And I'll guarantee the thirst."

"Say, can you beat it?" admiringly asked Max of Andrew Barrett. "Where does he get it?" And he tapped his own cranium sadly.

[Pg 105]

"And, Mulligan, if you should be locked up," added H. R., "the first thing you do when you get to jail is to declare a hunger strike. This will stamp you as Crusaders! And Crusaders never frighten Business."

"Great heavens!" whispered Max.

"Do we get the—" began Mulligan, anxiously.

"Nothing need be said about drinking. You'll get your forty."

"They can do their damndest," said Mulligan, looking like a hero-martyr.

IX

The four great actors, distinguished-looking, positively Beau Brummelesque, in shining top-hats of the latest fashion, went out of the Allied Arts Building to make history. They walked ahead abreast, their eyes fixed straight ahead. Pedestrians instinctively parted to let them by. Then they asked questions.

Andrew Barrett's agents answered the questions.

"They are the advance-guard. You ought to see what's coming!"

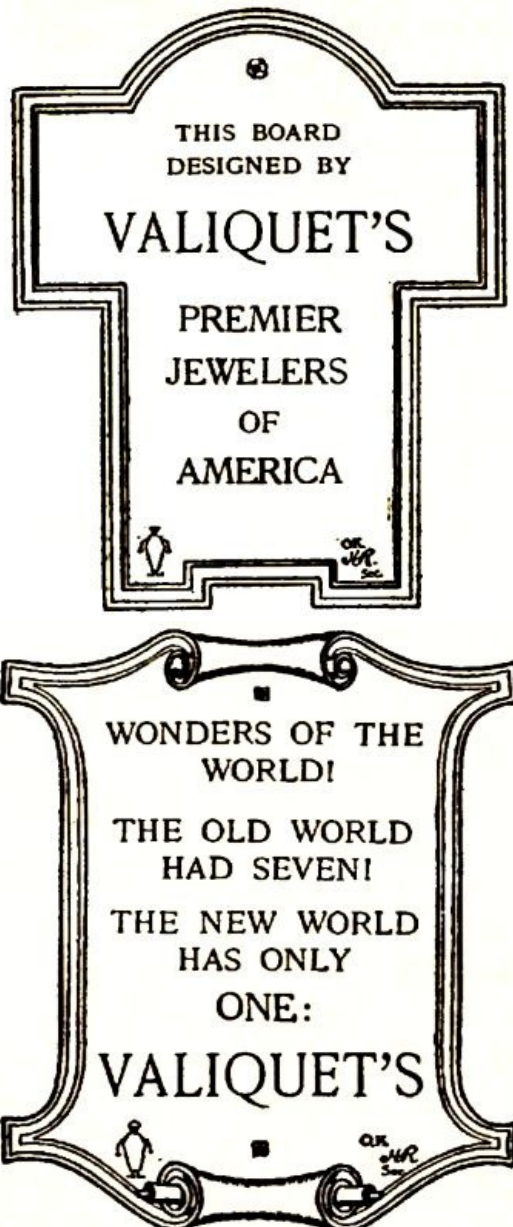
The faint sense of waiting for something worth waiting for, that so far only the annual police parade has been able to arouse in New York was discernible on the faces of the spectators. They began to cluster on the edges of the sidewalks. The chauffeurs began to look anxious. Honestly, they did!

Andrew Barrett had shown to the other shop-keepers the Valiquet designs and told them to watch for the great jewelers' astounding coup. He booked twenty-two orders for the next week.

At two o'clock the artists sallied forth once more. The throngs opened for them to pass. Those spectators who had put off lunching to see the epoch-making stunt were rewarded. They saw four perfectly attired gentlemen in top-hats, carrying dazzling escutcheons worthy of the premier jewel-shop in the world.

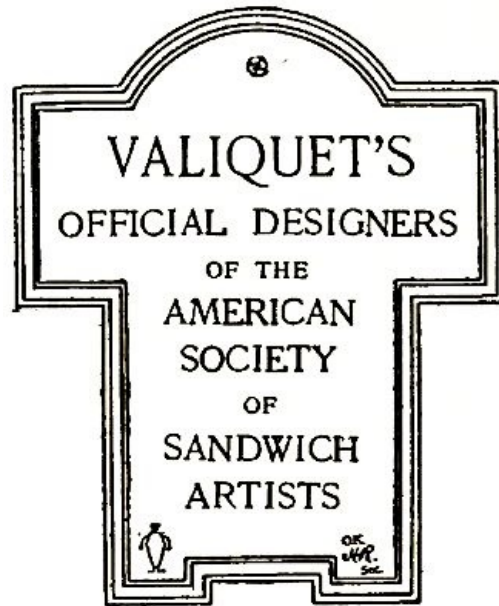
[Pg 107]

The six, walking professionally, carried the most beautiful boards ever seen, with these legends:



They were followed by the six picked sandwiches, in their working-clothes, but with wonderful boards.

[Pg 108]



The sandwich was the thing!

The sandwich-men were merely artists.

The spectators recalled that ultimately all men and all women must become sandwiches.

It made New-Yorkers realize that Death was still on the job. This gave them something to talk about that night at dinner, before dancing.

Also three hundred and fifty thousand people saw the O. K. of "H. R."

It is easy to remember two letters.

It was an extraordinary sensation. The big shops emptied themselves. In McQuery's and Oldman's and Mann & Baker's the rush to the Avenue doors was so great that floor-walkers who tried to stem the tide were crushed, manlike, by the women and borne, half-clad, upon the sidewalk. The proprietors looked at the crowds, heard the same remark, "What is it?" by the tens of thousands, saw the sandwiches, saw the looks on the tens of thousands of faces, and said, "Damn!"

They had not heard the knock of opportunity, and Valiquet's had. No wonder the jewel firm's regular two-hundred-per-cent. quarterly dividends were regular. It wasn't the big profit in gems; it was the cars!

[Pg 109]

The proprietors blamed their advertising managers.

The triumphal march of the sandwiches was more than a success, more than a sensation. It was an event. The four top-hatted histrions then and there forswore the stage. No artist had ever won such triumphs since Nero. They had started as Beau Brummels. They had become Kaisers—only infinitely more Cæsarean. And the union sandwiches following in Indian file, oblivious, like true artists, of the admiration of the rabble, thought of the end of the day, of the forty beers and the free food—of unearned wealth!—and actually swaggered so that their parasite-infested hirsuteness and their beast-faces took on an aspect of aristocratic eccentricity, of zeal for a noble cause. Their rags, in juxtaposition to the dazzling gorgeousness of their sandwich-boards, thus became ecclesiastical vestments—pilgrims wearing tatters in fulfillment of Lenten vows of

[Pg 110]

renunciation.

It was, of course, the masterly combination. Valiquet's was the last word in swellness, the label of utterly inutilitarian wealth.

The sandwich business was therefore the postscript.

"Only Valiquet's would think of doing such a thing!" said all Fifth Avenue, as usual giving credit to commercial genius instead of to the creative artist.

The other mercantile geniuses, seeing that their shoppers had declared a legal holiday, frantically telephoned to Mr. Andrew Barrett to send out *their* sandwiches at once. They would pay ten dollars per man; yes, twenty dollars. Only do it now! They did not wish to be put in the position of *following*. This is fatal on Fifth Avenue.

Valiquet's was skimming the cream! Never mind submitting the legends! Get a hustle on! Never mind striking catch-phrases. That would come later. Get the sandwiches on the Avenue! The bare name and the sandwiches!

The crowd, who had not had time to forget about the sandwich-men's parade of a few days before, cleverly saw that this was the second chapter. They therefore knew all about it and could and would say so to their less-clever fellow-beings. Completeness of knowledge is one of the nicest feelings in the world.

Barrett excitedly reported the avalanche of orders to H. R. and was promptly and calmly despatched to the board-makers to order fifty boards each of the six Valiquet designs, three hundred in all. H. R. then dictated a statement for publication, as to the real meaning of sandwiching on Fifth Avenue. It was not merely advertising—it was philanthropy. Much more went to feeding starving artists at the Colossal Restaurant than to the militant brethren in the shape of wages. It was also the best way of advertising Fifth Avenue's wares.

[Pg 111]

Mr. Wilberforce Josslyn, president of Valiquet's corporation, was told of the sandwich desecration of the holy name. His private secretary alone had the courage to impart the news.

Mr. Wilberforce Josslyn, feeling that he had to be to his help what his firm was to the world, turned around in his Circassian-walnut swivel-chair, said, "*Stop 'em!*" and revolved again.

The secretary carried the order to the first vice-president, Mr. Angus MacAckus; the first vice-president took it upon himself not only to stop 'em, but to punish 'em. He hastily descended to the main floor. What he saw through the Fifth Avenue doors appalled him, and worse. Even within the sacred precincts of the shop the reckless jewel-buying public and the conservative charge-accounts alike were talking about it, actually congratulating the gentlemanly salesmen and the courtly department-managers and the obliging watch-repairers.

Two men, whom he recognized as reporters by their intellectual faces, approached him, but he ran away from them toward the door.

Mrs. Vandergilt, undisputed Tsarina of society, was in one of the compartments of the plate-glass and solid-silver stile, and he waited in order to welcome her. They did not make a hundred thousand a year out of her, for she was not from Detroit, but they had been official jewelers to the family for sixty years, as they were of all the Vans who were Van Somebody. The annual storage of the Vandergilt crown jewels was a regular yearly story, like the police parade and the first snow-storm.

[Pg 112]

"MacAckus," said Mrs. Vandergilt in her sharp, imperious voice, "why did you do it? Not to advertise?"

"Certainly not," answered Mr. MacAckus, forgetting himself and speaking with heat.

"I thought not. Well, I am glad you are helping. I shall send my check to them. Poor men!" Then she had one of those moments of kindness that made people worship her: "It was a very clever thing to do, MacAckus. I am glad you had not only the brains, but the courage."

The reporters heard her. It was their business to get the news. Mr. MacAckus realized that Mrs. Vandergilt's approval had changed the complexion of the affair. At the same time, Valiquet's never talked for publication, and the remarks of their clients were sacred. He turned to the reporters and said in the peremptory tone that makes reporters so obedient:

"Not a word of this! Do you understand?"

"We understand perfectly," said the *American*. "We certainly do!" and wrote what Mrs. Vandergilt had said and what she was wearing. It would be a text for one of Arthur Migraine's editorial sermons, proving that millionaires, instead of being blown into ATOMS, should be freely permitted to give MONEY for starving men to convert into FOOD. In fact, NATURE wisely provided that millionaires should have MONEY to give away. The more the POOR received the LESS the millionaire would take to the USELESS GRAVE.

Mr. MacAckus, greatly perturbed by this deviation from the norm, rushed to the president's office to tell him Mrs. Vandergilt's opinion. Before he could speak, Mr. Wilberforce Josslyn said:

[Pg 113]

"Did you stop 'em?"

"No, sir. Let me explain. Mrs. Vandergilt just came in and—"

"I sent word to have 'em stopped!" said Mr. Josslyn, frowning.

"Let me explain, Mr. Josslyn—"

Disobedience cannot be explained away. Discipline must be enforced. It is better to blunder under orders than to prevent disorganization from interfering with dividends. The obvious advantage that a corporation president has over his subordinates is that he does not have to be hampered by petty details.

"Stop 'em!" he said, coldly.

"Mrs. Vandergilt said—"

"And Mr. Josslyn said stop 'em!" He turned his back on MacAckus, who thereupon rushed downstairs, frowning angrily. He'd stop 'em.

He walked out into the Avenue. It was blocked. He tried to elbow his way through the intelligent femininity and was nearly run in by a traffic policeman. The women refused to budge—the sandwiches were coming.

And would you believe it? As the shining top-hats drew near, the crowd actually divided itself, Red-Sea-wise, to let H. R.'s chosen people pass safely.

Mr. MacAckus did not faint, because he was too angry. He stepped in front of the four obvious gentlemen and held up a hand. He could not speak.

But the four, who had been elevated to imperial dignity by New York, moved on so majestically that Mr. MacAckus began to retreat before them, waving his hand frantically. He stepped backward, keeping time to their steps, his hand moving up and down in his wrath. It looked for all the world like a band-master indicating to his artists just how to play it.

[Pg 114]

Backward he stepped; onward they marched; until speech returned to him:

"Stop! *Stop! STOP!*"

They did not hear him.

He called to a policeman, "Stop 'em!"

H. R. had won!

The officer ran up. He was a policeman. He therefore said, "What's the matter?"

"These men have no right to use our name. We did not authorize them. We wish them stopped from using our firm's name for—er—advertising purposes. It's against the law. I'll make a complaint against them. Stop 'em!"

Max Onthemaker came forward, his face pale with determination. Four reporters trailed along.

"Touch these gentlemen at your peril!" he said to the policeman. "Here is a sworn copy of the statute referred to by that person." He shoved a typewritten document under the officer's nose. There were two seals on it; one was in anarchistic red and the other in Wall Street gold.

"Observe," pursued Mr. Onthemaker, impressively and very distinctly, that the reporters might not misquote, "that the statute says *the name of a living person* must not be used. But Valiquet's is a corporation. Do you get that, officer? A *corporation!*"

The officer read the newspapers. He knew what corporations were. They bought votes for the Republicans; and, besides, they only paid the men higher up. He therefore informed Mr. MacAckus:

"I can't do not'n."

[Pg 115]

"And even if you could, officer," said Mr. Onthemaker to the reporters, "the magistrate would let them go with a reprimand for you. We are ready for him." Then he said to MacAckus: "Get out of the way, or I'll have you arrested for blocking traffic, causing a crowd to collect, for assuming that you own the sidewalk, and for interfering with honest working-men who are trying to earn a peaceful living. Also for oppressing the poor. We have not asked you for money. We do not wish your charity." He paused, and, shaking a finger at Mr. MacAckus, said, loudly, "*We spurn your tainted money!*"

H. R. had not made a mistake in picking out this man to represent the society. Indeed, one reporter, in a stage whisper, actually hissed:

"*Bribery!*"

The officer looked at Mr. MacAckus and said, "Please move on, sir."

"That's polite enough," said one of the reporters, making a note of it. But Mr. MacAckus said:

"Why, you infernal—"

"*Move on!*" said the cop.

"I am Mr. MacAckus, of Valiquet's—"

"Tell him who you are, officer," said the diabolic Onthemaker, guessing the cop's nationality.

"I am Mr. McGinnis, of the thirty-first precinct."

People began to clap their hands—people who never went into Valiquet's. Mr. McGinnis thereupon laid a hand proudly on Mr. MacAckus's arm.

Mr. MacAckus lost his head; that is, he shook off the white-gloved hand of the law.

The law blew its whistle, as the law always does in civilized communities.

Instantly, as though the whistle had been the cue, the stirring sound of galloping steeds smote the asphalt of Fifth Avenue. [Pg 116]

"Let him go, Officer McGinnis," said Max Onthemaker, magnanimously. "We do not care to appear against him."

"Ain't he fine-looking?" a woman asked her companion, looking at the law. She even pointed at him.

Mr. McGinnis therefore haughtily said, "Resisting an officer—"

H. R. on horseback, in correct riding attire, following seven mounted traffic-squad men, appeared on the scene.

"There he is!" said Mr. Onthemaker to the reporters, dutifully yielding the center of the stage to its rightful possessor. After all, there was only one H. R., and both H. R. and Max Onthemaker knew it.

"That's the commissioner," said a clerk to the atmosphere.

"It's young Vandergilt!" asserted the fickle one who had thought McGinnis was fine-looking.

Before the traffic squad could dismount, H. R. jumped down from his horse, threw the reins to one of the mounted officers, said, "Look after him!" so decisively that no remonstrance was possible, approached the group, and said, "I'm Mr. Rutgers!"

Fifth Avenue was impassable now.

"*Who* is it?" asked ten thousand who had been asking, "*What* is it?"

Those who had heard proudly repeated the name to those who had not. Within forty seconds, as far as Thirty-fourth Street, intelligent New-Yorkers were saying, "It's Mr. Rutgers!"

Officer McGinnis touched his white-gloved hand to his cap. [Pg 117]

"That's Hendrik Rutgers!" explained Max Onthemaker to the reporters.

H. R. looked Mr. MacAckus in the eye and said, with patrician frigidity: "If you think you have any ground for a civil action, go ahead. My office is in the Allied Arts Building. I'll accept service in person or through my counsel here."

A murmur went up: these were law-abiding men. They therefore must be not only right, but mighty sure of it. All the lieutenant dared say, when he saw the representative of business and the representative of the leisure class was: "Gentlemen, I'm afraid you're blocking traffic. Perhaps, if you went inside—"

"Follow me!" said H. R. to his men, and he led them into Thirty-seventh Street. He halted fifty feet from the corner.

Mr. MacAckus had followed and unlimbered his heavy artillery.

"This infernal outrage—"

H. R. lost all patience. He said to the mounted lieutenant, "Take us to the magistrate!" To Max Onthemaker he whispered, "Got the papers with you?"

"And the reporters, too," answered the able counsel with much pride, as though the reporters were his own private property loaned to the cause for the occasion without charge.

Seeing that the police made no move, H. R. said, determinedly: "I insist upon going before the magistrate. You can report it at the station later and save us time."

This made the police officer hesitate. It always does. It works on the principle of treating your opponent as if he were a taxicabby who has overcharged.

"I guess that's the best way," said the lieutenant. [Pg 118]

"Thank you, Inspector. Will you kindly tell one of your men to bring my mount along? Thank you!" said H. R.

Politeness pays. By saying "thank you" in advance of the service no gentleman can refuse.

At the Magistrate's Court the session was short and sweet.

Mr. Onthemaker looked eloquent. The clerk who had typewritten the restraining orders whispered, "It's No. 5!" and his chief picked it out of the seventeen without hesitation. Everybody was impressed by the obvious efficiency. Efficiency must never be hidden.

The argument prepared by Mr. Onthemaker was one of the best his Honor had ever heard. He needed it for his own fall campaign. It certainly read well. He even read it in print—in advance.

"Let me see your argument," said the magistrate, and when Mr. Onthemaker gave him the speech he put it in his inside pocket. He did not know what to say until he saw the reporters taking notes. Then he knew.

"Discharged!" he said. It was the most popular decision in New York.

Max Onthemaker looked at his watch. Morris Lazarus by this time had doubtless applied for an order restraining Valiquet's from interfering with the lawful business of Jean Gerard, Walter Townsend, J. J. Fleming, William Mulligan, William F. Farquhar, Marmaduke de Beaville, Wilton Lazear, Percival Willoughby, and Francis Drake.

"We have secured an injunction against Valiquet's. Here it is," said Mr. Onthemaker. "You are the vice-president of your *corporation*. You might as well learn your own business from me." Then, with a fierce frown that there might be no back talk, he explained, with utter finality, "This is a *certified copy*!"

[Pg 119]

He approached Mr. MacAckus and took advantage of the contiguity to whisper: "If you don't wish to make your concern the laughing-stock of America get busy and keep the newspapers from printing that you were fool enough to oppose us in our perfectly legal position. Bear in mind that if you fight us you make us."

"No compromise!" said H. R., sternly.

"No, sir," answered Onthemaker, meekly. Then he hissed at MacAckus, "Do as I tell you, you boob!"

Mr. MacAckus clearly realized that this was a conspiracy. That always makes business men fear that they may lose money. The fear of that always sharpens their wits. It comes from a lifetime's training.

It was all Mr. Josslyn's fault. This made Mr. MacAckus almost despair. But he said, very kindly, to the reporters, "Gentlemen, will you all be good enough to call at our office before you print anything?"

The reporters, very kindly also, told him they would.

The free sandwiches returned to Fifth Avenue.

It was an ovation!

Art again had triumphed!

Proudly, up and down, from Thirty-fourth to Forty-second and back on the other side, they marched unhindered.

The reporters did justice to the story. Like all really big stories, it was legitimate news. They had indeed suspected advertising until H. R. refused to speak about himself.

[Pg 120]

"All you please about my poor sandwiches, but not one word about me. I have merely tried to rehabilitate the pariahs of the great mercantile world by reviving the lost art of perambulating publicity. If I have succeeded in making sandwiches free in New York, my work is done. Please do not mention my name!" Then he leaned over confidentially and said, very earnestly: "My family is conservative, and they hate to see the old name in print. Don't use it, boys. Please! That's why I never sign more than my initials!"

Ah, it was not alone modesty, but high social position and inherited wealth that were responsible for "H. R." instead of the full name? And the reporters? News is what is novel; also what is rare. H. R. was therefore doubly news. The minds of the reporters did not work like H. R.'s, but they arrived at the same point at the same time. This is genius—on the part of the other man.

Keeping your mouth shut after it happens is a still higher form of genius.

The newspapers gave him from two to six columns. Since the reporters could not get anything about H. R. from H. R., they got everything from Max Onthemaker, from the sandwich-men, from Andrew Barrett, and also from their inner consciousness and psychological insight.

Nine newspapers; nine different heroes; one name—and initials at that!

[Pg 121]

X

Andrew Barrett was made office-manager as well as business-getter. He was ordered to pay for the two additional clerks and the bookkeeper out of his own commissions or resign. He paid. This

was real business because even then young Mr. Barrett was overpaid for his work. But his real acumen was in recognizing a great man.

Since the pay-roll was a matter of Mr. Andrew Barrett's personally selected statistics, H. R. was certainly a wonder.

On Tuesday morning H. R., feeling that his own greatness had already become merely a matter of greater greatness, turned, manlike, to thoughts of love: he would share his greatness!

He would make Grace Goodchild marry him. He was sure he would succeed. He saw very clearly, indeed, how Mr. Goodchild, being a conservative banker, could be compelled to say yes.

In addition he would make Grace love him.

The strongest love is that love which is stronger than hatred or fear. Therefore the love that begins by hating or fearing is best. To overcome the inertia of non-loving is not so difficult as to stop the backward motion and turn it into forward.

He sat down and wrote a note:

DEAR GRACE, I am sending you herewith a few clippings. Remember what I told you. Don't let father prejudice you. Hope to see you soon. Busy as the dickens.

Yours,
H. R.

P.S.—I love you because you are You! Certainly I am crazy. But, dear, I know it!

With the note he sent her eighty-three inches of clippings and fourteen pictures. If that wasn't fame, what was? He also sent flowers.

That afternoon before the *thé dansant* hour he called at the Goodchild residence.

"Miss Goodchild!" he said to the man, instead of asking for her. He pulled out his watch, looked at it, and before the man could say he would see if she were at home to H. R., added, "Yes!"

He was punctual, as the man could see. The man therefore held out a silver card-tray.

"Say it's Mr. Rutgers," H. R. told him. "And straighten out that rug. You've walked over it a dozen times!"

It was plain to see that it was H. R. who really owned this house. He must, since he wasn't afraid of the servants. And the worst of it was that the footman could not resent it: the gentleman was so obviously accustomed to regarding servants as domestic furniture. He dehumanized footmen, deprived them of souls, left them merely arms and legs to obey, machine-like. They call such "well-ordered households." Certainly not. It isn't a matter of the orders, but of the soul-excision.

Grace Goodchild walked in—behind her mother. The footman stood by the door, evidently by request.

Everything in civilized communities is by request.

"How do you do?" said H. R., pleasantly. "Is this mother?" He bowed to Mrs. Goodchild—the bow of a social equal—his eyes full of a highly intelligent appreciation of physical charm. Then he asked Grace, "Did you read them?"

Mrs. Goodchild had intended to be stern, but the young man's undisguised admiration softened her wrath to pleasant sarcasm.

"I wished to see for myself," she said, not very hostilely, "if you were insane. I see you are—"

"I am," agreed H. R., amicably, "and have been since I saw her. And the worst of it is, I am very proud of it."

"Will you oblige me by leaving this house quietly?"

"Certainly," H. R. assured her. "I didn't come to stay—this time. I'm glad to have seen you. Has Grace told you I'm to be your son-in-law?"

He looked at her proudly, yet meekly. It was wonderful how well he managed to express the conflict. Then he apologized contritely. "I was too busy to call before. My grandmother has never met you, has she?" He looked at her anxiously, eager to clear Mrs. Goodchild's name before the court of his family.

At one fell swoop H. R. had deleted the name of Goodchild from the society columns.

Mrs. Goodchild said, huskily, "Frederick, ring for a policeman."

"I'll break his damned neck if he does," said H. R., with patrician calmness. "Don't you ever again dare to listen while I am here, Frederick. You may go."

H. R. looked so much as if he meant what he said that Grace was pleasantly thrilled by his masterfulness. But not for worlds would she show it facially. When a woman can't lie to the man who loves her she lies to herself by looking as she does not feel.

[Pg 122]

[Pg 123]

[Pg 124]

"Do you wish me to go? For the sake of peace?" he asked Grace, anxiously.

There was nothing he would not do, no torture too great to endure, for her sake—not even the exquisite agony of absence. That there might be no misunderstanding, he added, softly, "Do you?"

"Don't you talk to my daughter!" said Mrs. Goodchild, furious at being excluded from the supreme command. Hearing no assent, she was compelled by the law of nature to repeat herself: "Don't you talk to my daughter!"

H. R. looked at her in grieved perplexity. "Do you mean that you are deliberately going to be a comic-weekly mother-in-law and make me the laughing-stock of my set?"

Feeling the inadequacy of mere words to express the thought she had not tried to express, Mrs. Goodchild called on her right hand for aid; she pointed. Being concerned with gesture rather than intent on direction, she, alas! pointed to a window.

He shook his head at her and then at the window, and told her: "To jump out of that one would be as bad as having me arrested. Do you want the infernal reporters to make you ridiculous? Do you realize that I am the most-talked-about man in all New York? Don't you know what newspaper ridicule is? Don't you? Say no!"

To make sure of her own grasp of the situation Mrs. Goodchild, who was dying to shriek at the top of her voice, compressed her lips. H. R. instantly perceived the state of affairs and double-turned the key by fiendishly placing his right forefinger to his own lips. This would give to his mother-in-law the two excellent habits of obedience and silence.

[Pg 125]

He turned to the girl and said: "Grace, don't hide behind your mother. Let me look my fill. It's got to last me a whole week!"

Grace saw in his face and knew from his voice that he was neither acting nor raving. His words were as the gospel, the oldest of all gospels, which, unlike all others, is particularly persuasive in the springtime. He was a fine-looking chap, and the newspapers were full of him, and he was in love with her. He interested her. But of course he was impossible. But also she was New York, and, to prove it, she must be epigrammatic. All her life she had listened to high-class vaudeville. She said, icily, yet with a subtle consciousness of her own humor, "If you wish to worship, why don't you try a church?"

"Which?" he retorted so promptly and meaningfully that she almost felt the wedding-ring on her finger. He pursued: "And when? I have the license all ready. See?"

He pulled out of his pocket a long envelope containing a communication from Valiquet's lawyer. "Here it is!" and he held it toward her.

Being young and healthy, she laughed approvingly.

"Has it come to this, in my own house?" exclaimed Mrs. Goodchild in dismay. Being rich and living in New York, she did not know her daughter's affairs.

"Why not?" asked H. R., with rebuking coldness. "In whose house should our marriage be discussed?" Then he spoke to Grace with a fervor that impressed both women: "I love you as men used to love when they were willing to murder for the sake of their love. Look at me!"

[Pg 126]

He spoke so commandingly that Grace looked, wonder and doubt in her eyes.

In some women incertitude expresses itself in silence. Her mother was of a different larynx. She wailed: "What shall I do? What shall I do?" And sank back in her arm-chair. After one second's hesitation Mrs. Goodchild decided to clasp her own hands with a gesture of helplessness such as Pilate would have used had he been Mrs. Pontius. She did so, turning the big emerald *en cabochon*, so that she could plaintively gaze at it. Eight thousand dollars. Then she turned the gem accusingly in the direction of this man who might, for all she knew, be penniless. He was good-looking. Hendrik was Dutch. So was Rutgers. Could he belong?

"I beg your pardon, moth—Mrs. Goodchild," said H. R. so very courteously and contritely that he looked old-fashioned. "You must forgive me. But she *is* beautiful! She will grow, God willing, to look more like you every day. By making me regard the future with pleasurable anticipation, you yourself give me one more reason why I must marry Grace."

Grace looked at her mother and smiled—at the effect. Mrs. Goodchild confessed to forty-six.

"I am making Grace Goodchild famous," H. R. pursued, briskly, and paused that they might listen attentively to what was to follow.

Mother and daughter looked at him with irrepressible curiosity. Their own lives had so few red-blooded thrills for them that they enjoyed theatricals as being "real life." This man was an Experience!

He shook his head and explained, mournfully: "It is very strange, this thing of not belonging to yourself but to the world. It is a sacrifice Grace must make!"

[Pg 127]

His voice rang with a subtle regret. But suddenly he raised his head proudly and looked straight at her.

"It is a sacrifice worth making—for the sake of the downtrodden whom you will uplift with your

beauty. *Au revoir*, Grace. *I am needed!*"

He approached her. She tried to draw back. He halted before her, took her hand, raised it to his lips and kissed it.

"I am the dirt under your feet," he murmured, and left the room.

His was the gait of the Invincibles. He had cast a bewitching spell of unreality over the entire drawing-room that made Grace feel like both actress and audience.

She heard him in the hall calling, "Frederick!" And, after a brief pause, "My hat and cane!"

There was another pause. Then she heard Frederick say, infinitely more respectfully than Frederick had ever spoken to Mr. Goodchild, "Thank *you* very much, sir."

Mrs. Goodchild paid Frederick by the month for working. H. R. had given Frederick twenty dollars for being an utterly useless menial. Hence Frederick's logical gratitude and respect.

[Pg 128]

XI

H. R. walked to his office, thinking of the engagement-ring. He therefore rang for Maximilian Onthemaker, Esquire.

"Come up at once!"

"Damnation, I will," said Max. "I'm busy as the dickens, but an order from you is—"

"Another front page—with pictures!"

"I'm half-way up, already!" said Max. Before the telephone receiver could descend on the holder, H. R. heard a voice impatiently shriek, "Down!" to an elevator-man two and one-half miles away.

When Mr. Onthemaker, his face alight with eagerness to serve the cause of the poor sandwich-men free gratis, for nothing, could speak, H. R. told him, calmly:

"Max, I am going to marry the only daughter of George G. Goodchild, president of the Ketcham National Bank. Get photographs of her. Try La Touche and the other fashionable photographers. They will require an order from Miss Goodchild."

"Written?" asked Mr. Onthemaker, anxiously.

"I don't know."

"I'll call up my office, and Miss Hirschbaum will give the order."

"Can she talk like—"

"Oh, she goes to the swell Gentile theaters," Max reassured him.

[Pg 129]

"Don't say I'm engaged, and tell 'em not to bother the parents." He meant the reporters.

Max thought of nothing else. "Leave it to me. Say, Hendrik—"

"Mr. Rutgers!" The voice and the look made Max tremble and grow pale.

"I was only joking," he apologized, weakly. He never repeated the offense. "I'll attend to it, Mr. Hendrik— I mean Mr. Rutgers."

"When Barrett comes in I'll send him down to you. Good day."

When Andrew Barrett returned he said, impetuously, "I'm afraid I'll have to have some help, H. R."

"I was going to tell you, my boy, that from to-morrow on you will have to go on salary."

Barrett's smiles vanished. He shook his head.

H. R. went on, in a kindly voice: "You've done very well and I'm much pleased with your work. But you mustn't be a hog."

Barrett had made bushels of money by taking advantage of the opportunity to do so. The victorious idea was another's, the machinery was the society's, the work was done by the sandwiches. But Mr. Andrew Barrett was the salesman, the transmuted into cash. He was entitled to all he desired to make so long as he didn't raise prices. Injustice stared him in the face with smiles! Reducing his gain and smiling! H. R. would as lief get another man! Barrett forgot that he could get no business until H. R.'s astounding Valiquet's coup made the agent's job one of merely writing down names. He forgot it, but he did not forget his own successor. All he could say, in a boyishly obstinate way, was, "Well, I think—"

"You mustn't think, and especially you must not think I'm an ass. You know very well that this is only the beginning of a very remarkable revolution in the advertising business. I need your services in installing the machinery and organizing the office, details that I leave to you because

[Pg 130]

you have brains. Your salary will be a hundred a week and five per cent. on all new business. After I pass on to a still higher field I will make you a present of this business for you to have and to hold till death do you part. The Barrett Advertising Agency will be all yours. It will do a bigger business every year. And if you don't like it, you may leave this minute. You are young yet. Is it settled?"

Andrew Barrett nodded.

H. R. said, seriously: "It's about time sandwiching spread. How many on the Avenue to-day?"

"Nineteen firms; one hundred and eleven men. I think—"

H. R. knew what Barrett was about to say. He therefore said it for Barrett. "Now that you have Fifth Avenue, move west and east to Sixth and Madison and Fourth and try Broadway and Twenty-third and Thirty-fourth and Forty-second—"

"I was just going to propose it to you," said Barrett, aggrievedly.

"I know you have brains. That's why you are here. I trust you implicitly. This is a man's job. There will be big money in it for you. For me—" He ceased speaking, and stared meditatively out of the window.

Andrew Barrett wondered with all his soul what the chief was reading in big print in the future.

Andrew Barrett waited. Presently H. R. frowned. Then he smiled slightly.

Barrett stared fascinatedly. Ah, the lure of mystery! If more men appreciated it, polygamy would be inevitable—and liberal divorce laws. [Pg 131]

H. R. looked up.

"Oh, are you here?" he smiled paternally, forgivingly.

Barrett beamed.

"My boy, I wish you'd run over to Max Onthemaker's or get him on the telephone. The newspapers are going to publish it."

"Yes, sir, I will. Er—what are they—what are you going to spring on an enraptured metropolis?"

"My impending marriage to Grace Goodchild, only daughter of Goodchild, president of the Ketcham National Bank. See that it is well handled. And, Barrett?"

"Yes, sir?"

"The old people don't relish the idea. She is the most beautiful girl in New York."

"I've seen her! Pippinissima!" exclaimed Andrew Barrett, heartfully.

"Ten millions," said Hendrik Rutgers, calmly.

"My God!" whispered young Mr. Barrett, New-Yorker.

He meant what he said.

Ten millions!

Mr. Onthemaker, Andrew Barrett, and their faithful phalanx of star space men who always signed their stuff called in a body on La Touche, the photographer of the moment.

He refused to give them Miss Goodchild's photograph. He wished his name used, of course, but he was too sensible to disregard professional ethics.

"Mr. Rutgers said we could get it," said Andrew Barrett, sternly. [Pg 132]

"I must have her permission. Hang it, boys, I am just as anxious as you—as I can be to do what I can for you. But I don't dare. These swell people are *queer!*" the photographer explained, aggrievedly.

"I'll call her up myself," said Max Onthemaker, resolutely. "What's the Goodchild number?"

He went to the telephone and gave the number of his own office in low tones. Presently he said, loudly enough to be heard by all, "Is this 777 Fifth Avenue?"

He alone heard the answer. He would not lie. He was a lawyer. It was unnecessary.

"Can I speak with Miss Goodchild? No; *Miss* Goodchild."

After a judiciously measured pause he spoke again: "Good afternoon. This is Mr. Onthemaker speaking. Quite well, thank you. I hope you are the same!... That's good!... Yes, miss, I saw him this morning. The papers wish to publish your photograph.... I'm sorry, but they say they simply must!... I am at La Touche's studio.... They doubtless do not do you justice, but they are the best ever taken of you—... No, I don't think they can wait for new ones.... One moment, please—"

He held his hand in front of the transmitter so she couldn't hear him say to La Touche:

"She wants some new ones."

"To-morrow at two," said La Touche.

"Give us the old ones now," chorused the reporters. "We'll publish the new ones for the wedding."

"I am sorry"—Max again spoke into the telephone—"but they say they want some now. They'll use the others later.... Which one?... The one Mr. Rutgers likes?... Yes, ma'am. Thank you very much."

Foreseeing unintelligent incredulity, Mr. Onthemaker did not hang up the receiver. It was just as well, for the cautious La Touche said, "I want to talk to her." [Pg 133]

"Certainly," said Max, and hastily rose.

"Miss Goodchild," said the photographer, respectfully, "will it be all right if I let the reporters have—"

"Give him the one Mr. Rutgers likes," came in a sweet voice, without the slightest trace of Yiddish or catarrh. They would be wonderful linguists, if they didn't always begin by, "Say, listen."

"Which one is that?"

"The one he likes. And please send the bill to me, not to papa," with the accent properly on the last syllable.

"There will be no charge, Miss Goodchild. Thank you. I only wished to make sure you approved."

La Touche rose and, turning to the friendly reporters, asked, wrathfully, "How in blazes do I know which is the one Mr. Rutgers liked?"

"Let us pick it out," said one reporter. He wore his hair long.

"Any one will do," said another, considerately.

"I think I know which it is," said Barrett, taking pity on the photographer. To Mr. Onthemaker he whispered, "Max, you're a second H. R."

"I try to be," modestly said Sam.

And so the newspapers published the official preference of the lucky man. They published it because she was going to marry H. R.

That same morning Mr. Goodchild called up the city editors. He was so stupid that he was angry. He threatened criminal action and also denied the engagement. Rutgers was only a discharged clerk who had worked in his bank. He had been annoying his daughter, but he, Mr. Goodchild, would take steps to put an end to further persecution. Rutgers would not be allowed to call. He had, Mr. Goodchild admitted, called—uninvited. Had a man no privacy in New York? What was the matter with the police? What was he paying taxes for—to be annoyed by insane adventurers and damned reporters? He didn't want any impertinence. If they didn't print the denial of the engagement and the facts he would put the matter in his lawyer's hands. [Pg 134]

The afternoon papers that day and the morning papers on the next printed another portrait of Miss Grace Goodchild because she was not engaged to H. R.

It was so exactly what a Wall Street millionaire father would do that everybody in New York instantly recognized a romance in high life!

Grace Goodchild never had known before how many people knew her and how many more wished to know her. The reporters camped on her front door-steps and the camera specialists could not be shooed away by Mr. Goodchild when he was going out on his way to the bank.

He assaulted a photographer. The papers therefore printed a picture of the infuriated money power in the act of using a club on a defenseless citizen. They did it very cleverly: by manipulating the plates they made Mr. Goodchild look four times the size of the poor photographer.

Max Onthemaker brought suit for fifty thousand dollars damages to the feelings, cranium, and camera of Jeremiah Legare, the *Tribune's* society snapper.

From 10 A.M. to 7 P.M. Grace held a continuous levee. Mrs. Goodchild was in handsomely gowned hysterics. Mr. Goodchild got drunk at his club. [Pg 135]

Yes, he did. The house committee ignored it. When they saw the afternoon papers they condoned it. And yet all that the newspapers said was that Grace Goodchild and Hendrik Rutgers were *not* married.

And they blame the papers for inaccuracy.

H. R. knew that he must make his love for Grace plausible, and his determination to marry her persistent and picturesque.

His concern was with the public. He therefore called up Grace on the telephone. At the other end they wished to know who was speaking. He replied, "Tell Frederick to come to the telephone at once!"

Frederick responded.

"Are you there?" asked H. R., after the fashion of Frederick's compatriots. "Frederick, go instantly to Miss Grace and tell her to come to the telephone on a matter of life and death. It's Mr. Rutgers. Don't mention my name."

This wasn't one of Frederick's few duties when he deigned to accept employment in the Goodchild household. But H. R. expected to be obeyed. Therefore he was obeyed.

"Yes, sir; very good, sir," said Frederick, proud to act as Mercury. He rushed off.

"Telephone, Miss Grace. He said it was a matter of life and death."

"Who is it? Another reporter?"

"Oh no, ma'am. He's waiting, my lady."

Once in a while Frederick proved that he was worth his weight in gold by forgetting that he was in America. When he did, he always called Grace my lady.

She therefore went to the telephone. Of course H. R. was born lucky. But, as a matter of fact, by deliberately establishing Frederick on a plane of perennial inferiority he had made such a stroke of luck inevitable.

[Pg 136]

Since it was a matter of life and death, Grace instantly asked, "*Who* is it?"

"Listen, Grace. The entire country is going wild about you. Your portrait is being admired from Maine to California. But bear up with what's coming. We've got to bring father around to our way of thinking, and—"

"Who is it? Who is it?"

"Great Scott! Can't you recognize the voice? It's Hendrik."

Her exasperated nerves made her say, angrily, "I think you are—"

"Don't think I'm conceited, but I know it."

"I feel like telling you—"

"I'll say it for you. Close your ears till I'm done." After a pause: "I've insulted myself. I love you all the more for it! Grace, you must be brave! If you survive this next week—"

"My God!" she said, invoking divine aid for the first time since they moved to Fifth Avenue, thinking of what the newspapers could say.

"He's with us, sweetheart," Hendrik assured her. "Are you an Episcopalian?"

"Yes!" she replied before she could think of not answering.

"Good! I love you. Wait!"

His voice as he entreated her to wait rang with such anguish that she irrepressibly asked, "What?"

"I love you!"

He left the telephone and gathered together sixty-eight clippings, which he put in an envelope. He went to a fashionable florist, opened an account, and ordered some exquisite flowers. They were going to ask for financial references, but the flowers he ordered were so expensive that they felt ashamed of their own distrust. He stopped at Valiquet's, where they hated him so much that they respected him, bought a wonderful gold vanity-box, inside of which he sent a card. On the card he wrote:

[Pg 137]

More than ever!

H. R.

He sent clippings, flowers, and vanity-box to Miss Goodchild, 777 Fifth Avenue, by messenger. Charge account.

He sent for Fleming and told him he wished the Public Sentiment Corps to tackle their first job. H. R. had prepared a dozen letters of protest which the artists must copy before receiving their day's wages—one copy for each paper. The letters expressed the writers' admiration, contempt, approval, abhorrence, indignation, and commendation of the journalistic treatment of the Goodchild-Rutgers affair. Real names and real addresses were given. It beat Pro Bono Publico, Old Subscriber, and Decent Citizen all to pieces. H. R. supplied various kinds of stationery—some with crests, others very humble. The chirography was different. That alone was art.

The newspapers realized that H. R. had become news. The public wanted to read about him. The papers were the servants of the public. Circulation was invented for that very purpose.

Not content with the services of the Public Sentiment Corps, H. R. commanded Andrew Barrett to tip off the friendly reporters—Andrew by this time was calling them by their first name—to watch the Goodchild residence on Fifth Avenue and also the Ketcham National Bank on Nassau Street.

[Pg 138]

Thinking that this meant elopement up-town and shooting down-town, the reporters despatched the sob artists to Fifth Avenue and the veteran death-watch to the bank.

They were rewarded.

Parading up and down the Goodchild block on the Avenue were six sandwich-men. They carried the swellest sandwiches in Christendom. This was the first use of the famous iridescent glass mosaic sandwich in history. It was exquisitely beautiful. But the legends were even more beautiful:

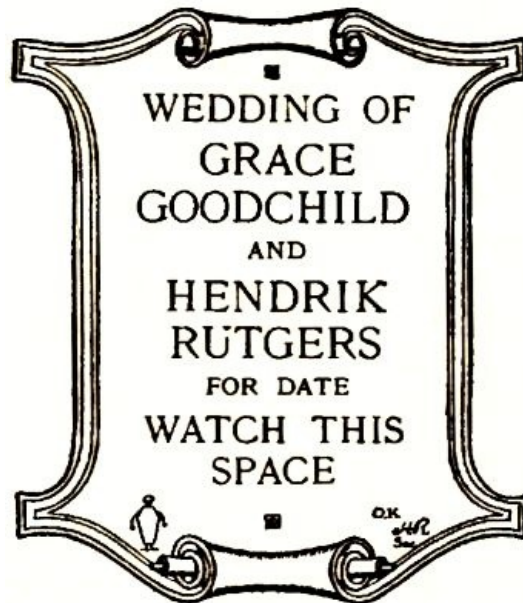
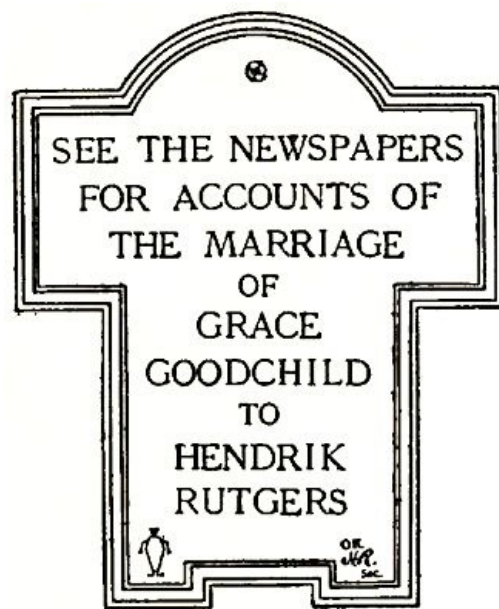


This last he stationed in front of the Goodchild house.

Across the street, leaning against the Central Park wall, was Morris Lazarus, Mr. Onthemaker's able associate counsel. His pockets were bulging with numbered legal documents in anticipation of hostilities from Christians, policemen, and other aliens. He had told the reporters that he was one of Mr. Rutgers's counsel and did not propose to allow the sandwich-men to be interfered with by anybody. He also distributed his card, that the name might not be misspelled. He had not yet changed Morris into Maurice.

[Pg 139]







The sandwiches paraded up and down the Avenue sidewalk, never once going off the block. As two of the artists passed each other they saluted—the sandwich union's sign a rigid forefinger drawn quickly across the throat with a decapitating sweep: lambs expecting execution in the world's vast abattoir. The answering sign was a quick mouthward motion of the rigid thumb to represent the assuaging of thirst at the close of day. Thus did H. R. reward industry.

Before the sandwich-men had made the beat a dozen times all upper Fifth Avenue heard about it. A stream of limousines, preciously freighted, halted before the Goodchild mansion and poured out into the sidewalk friends and acquaintances of the Goodchilds. On the dowagers' faces you could see the smug self-congratulations that their daughters, thank goodness, did not have to be wooed thus vulgarly to get into the newspapers. And on the daughters the watching reporters saw smiles and envious gleams of bright eyes. Why couldn't *they* be thus desperately wooed in public? To let the world know you were desired, to have a man brave all the world in order to let the world know it! It was heroism! And even more: it was great fun!

[Pg 140]

The dowagers went in to express both surprise and condolence to Mrs. Goodchild. The girls rushed to Grace's boudoir to ask questions.

Mrs. Goodchild tried to brazen it out. Then she tried to treat it humorously. But the dowagers called both bluffs. Then she foolishly told them, "The poor young man is quite insane."

They chorused, "He must be!" with conviction—the conviction that she was lying like a suburban boomer. Of course she paid him for the work.

[Pg 141]

Grace was in an unphilosophical frame of mind. H. R. had made her the laughing-stock of New York. It would have been ridiculous if it were not so serious to her social plans. She hated him! Being absolutely helpless to help herself, her hatred embraced the world—the world that would laugh at her! All the world! Particularly the women. Especially those of her own age. They would laugh! This is the unforgivable sin in women because their sense of humor is *minus*. And when they laugh—

Just then the avalanche of those she hated the most swooped down upon her. Her eyes were red from acute aqueous mortification. They saw it. They said in chorus, sorrowfully, "You poor thing!"

Who said the rich had no hearts? The girls had given to her poverty without her asking for it. It always makes people charitable when they create poverty unasked.

[Pg 142]

"I wouldn't stand it!" cried one.

"Nor I!" chorused fourteen of Grace's best friends.

Outside, the Avenue, for the first time in its dazzling history, was blocked by automobiles. You would have sworn it was the shopping district in the Christmas week. The reason was that the occupants of the autos had told the chauffeurs to stop until they could read the sandwiches.

The reporters were ringing the front-door bell and the rapid-fire tintinnabulation was driving Frederick frantic. Mrs. Goodchild had told him not to send for the police. The reporters, feeling treated like rank outsiders, were in no pleasant frame of mind.

Up-stairs Grace, hiding her wrath, overwhelmed by the accursed sympathy of her best friends, said, helplessly, "What can I do?" She didn't like to tell them she wished to bury them with her own hands.

From fifteen youthful throats burst forth the same golden word—"Elope!"

[Pg 143]

She gasped and stared blankly.

"It's the greatest thing I ever heard. I don't know him, but if he is half-way presentable you can

teach him table manners in a week. I'd make my father give him a job in the bank!" asserted Marion Beekman.

"Me, too!" declared Ethel Vandergilt.

"He's just splendid," volunteered a brunette, enthusiastically.

"And did you see the papers!" shrieked Verona Mortimer. "I say, *did* you see the papers? *And* the pictures! Girls, she's a regular devil, and we never knew it! Where did you hide your brains all these years, Gracie, dear?"

"I never would have thought it possible," said the cold, philosophical Katherine Van Schaick. "I call it mighty well engineered. Did *you* tell him to do it, Grace? If so you are a genius!"

"What does he look like?"

[Pg 144]

"Is he of the old New Jersey Rutgers?"

"If he's good-looking and has money, what's wrong with him? Booze?" asked a practical one.

"He isn't married, is he?" asked a doll-face with Reno in her heavenly eyes.

At this a hush fell on the group. It was the big moment.

"How exciting!" murmured one.

"Is he married, Grace?"

Fifteen pairs of eyes pasted themselves on Gracie's. She barely caught herself on the verge of confessing ignorance. She was dazed by the new aspect of her own love-affair.

These girls envied her!

"No!" she said, recklessly.

"It's her father," prompted a slim young Sherlock Holmes.

"No; Mrs. Goodchild!" corrected a greater genius.

"Maybe it's Grace herself," suggested the envious Milly Walton.

"How can I stop it?" asked Grace, angrily.

"*What?*" shrieked all.

"Why, girls," said Miss Van Schaick, "she isn't responsible for it, after all!"

Before the disappointment could spoil their pleasure one of them said, impatiently, "Oh, let's look at 'em!"

They rushed to the window.

"Let's go downstairs. We can see 'em better!" And Grace's friends thereupon rushed away. One of them was considerate enough to say, "Come on, Grace!" and Grace followed, not quite grasping the change in the situation. Her fears were not so keen; her doubts keener.

They nearly overturned their respective mammas in their rush to get to the windows.

[Pg 145]

"Grace," said Miss Van Schaick, who had never before called her anything but "Miss—er—Goodchild," "send out and tell them to stop and face this way. I don't think I read all the sandwiches."

"Yes! Yes!"

"Oh, do!"

"Please, Grace, tell 'em!" It sounded like election, when women shall vote. Much more melodious than to-day.

The dowagers were made speechless. They had acquired that habit before their daughters.

Grace capitulated to the incense.

"Frederick, go out and tell them to stop and face this way," commanded Grace, with a benignant smile.

"My de—" began Mrs. Goodchild, mildly.

"I have lived," said Miss Van Schaick in her high-bred, level voice that people admiringly called insulting, "to see a New York society man do something really original. I must ask Beekman Rutgers why his branch of the family did not inherit brains with the real estate."

Mrs. Goodchild gasped—and began to look resigned. From there to pride the jump would be slight. But hers was not a mind that readjusted itself very quickly.

"Oh, look!" and the girls began to read the legends aloud.

The dowagers rose, prompted by the same horrid fear. Chauffeurs were bad enough. But

sandwich-men!

The world moves rapidly these days. One week ago these mothers did not know sandwich-men even existed. A new peril springs up every day.

They decided, being wise, not to scold their daughters.

The girls shook hands with Grace with such warmth that she felt as if each had left a hateful wedding-gift in her palm. Mrs. Goodchild went up-stairs weeping or very close to it. She could not see whither it all would lead, and she was the kind that must plan everything in advance to be comfortable. By always using a memorandum calendar she cleverly managed to have something to look forward to in this life. [Pg 146]

Grace remained. She was thinking. When she thought she always tapped on the floor with her right foot, rhythmically. She realized that H. R.'s courtship of her had changed in aspect. She knew that girls in her set thought everything was a lark. But they themselves did not visit those who had larked beyond a certain point. An ecstatic "What fun!" soon changed to a frigid "How perfectly silly!" It was not so difficult to treat the sandwich episode humorously now, or even to take intelligent advantage of the publicity. She knew that, with the negligible exception of a few old fogies, the crass vulgarity of H. R.'s public performances would not harm her unless her father took it seriously enough to appeal to the law about it, when the same old fogies would say she should have ignored it. But she could not clearly see the end of it—that is, an ending that would redound to her glory. This man was a puzzle, a paradox, an exasperation. He was too unusual, too adventurous, too clever, too dangerous; he had too much to gain and nothing to lose. How should she treat him? He did not classify easily. He was masterful. He loved her. Masterful men in love have a habit of making themselves disagreeable.

In how many ways would this masterful man, who was resourceful, original, undeterred by conventions, indifferent to the niceties of life, unafraid of public opinion as of social ostracism, make himself disagreeable? Was he serious in his determination to marry her? Or was it merely a scheme to obtain notoriety? Was he a crank or a criminal? She couldn't marry him. What would he do? What wouldn't he do? How long would he keep it up? Must she flee to Europe? [Pg 147]

Her foot was tap-tapping away furiously. She ceased to think in order to hate him! Then because she hated him she feared him. Then because she feared him she respected him. Then because she respected him she didn't hate him. Then because she didn't hate she began to think of him. But all she knew about him was that he said he loved her and everybody in New York knew it! Who was he? What was he? Should she start an inquiry? And yet—

"I beg pardon, miss. But the men—" Frederick paused.

"Yes?"

"They are standing." He meant the sandwiches.

"Well?"

"They are," he reminded her, desperately but proudly, "Mr. Rutgers's men."

"Tell them to go away," she said.

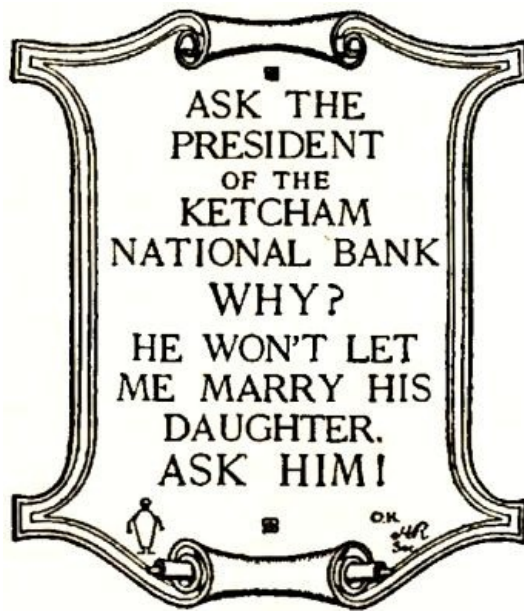
He stared a moment, for as the consort of the owner of the men she had feudal obligations to fulfil. He remembered that this was America.

"Very good, miss," he said.

She went up-stairs. She wished to think. It would probably make her head ache. She therefore told her maid to wake her at six and, taking up one of Edwin Lefevre's books, she went to sleep. [Pg 148]

XII

On Nassau Street twenty sandwich-men were parading, ten on each side of the street, in the block where the Ketcham National Bank stood. Each sandwich bore this legend:



Besides 12,466 men and 289 women, 13 reporters read the sandwiches.

The men looked pleased; they were seeing a show on D. H. tickets. The women sighed enviously and opened their latest Robert W. Chambers in the street as they walked on. The thirteen reporters walked into the bank, went straight into the president's office, and while he was still smiling his welcome asked him why he would not let H. R. marry Grace.

[Pg 149]

Mr. Goodchild nearly sat in the electric chair. The vice-president fortunately was able to grasp in time the hand that held the big paper-weight.

"Remember the bank!" solemnly counseled the vice-president.

"To hell with the bank!" said Mr. George G. Goodchild for the first and only time in his Republican life.

"Unless you talk to us fully and politely," said the *Globe* man, "we propose to interview your directors and ask each and every one of them to tell us the name of your successor. If you raise your hand again I'll not only break in your face, but I'll sue you and thus secure vacation money and a raise in salary. The jury is with me. Come! Tell us why you won't let Mr. Rutgers marry Grace."

Here in his own office the president of a big Wall Street bank was threatened with obliterated features and the extraction of cash. The cause of it, H. R., was worse than a combination of socialism and smallpox; he was even worse than a President of the United States in an artificial bull market.

Mr. Goodchild walked up and down the room exactly thirteen times—one for each reporter—and then turned to the vice-president.

"Send for the police!" he commanded.

"Remember the newspapers," agonizedly whispered the vice-president.

The *Globe* man overheard him. "Present!" he said, and saluted. Then he took out a lead-pencil, seized a pad from the president's own desk, and said, kindly, "I'll take down all your reasons in shorthand, Mr. Goodchild!"

[Pg 150]

"Take yourself to hell!" shrieked the president.

"*Après vous, mon cher Alphonse,*" retorted the *Globe* man, with exquisite courtesy. "Boys, you heard him. Verbatim!"

All the reporters wrote four words.

The *Globe* man hastily left the president's room and went up to the bank's gray-coated private policeman who was trying to distinguish between the few who wished to deposit money and the many who desired to ask the sandwich question or at least hoped to hear the answer. The sacred precincts of the Ketcham National Bank had taken on the aspect of a circus arena. H. R.'s erstwhile fellow-clerks looked the only way they dared—terrified! They would have given a great deal to have been able to act as human beings.

"The reporters are in the president's room!" ran the whisper among the clerks. From there it reached the curious mob within the bank. From there it spread to the congested proletariat without the doors. Said proletariat began to grow. Baseball bulletin-boards were not displayed, but the public was going to get something for nothing. Hence, free country.

The *Globe* man heard one of the bank's messengers call the policeman "Jim." Being a contemporary historian, he addressed the policeman amicably.

"Jim, Mr. Goodchild says to bring in Senator Lowry and party."

With that he beckoned to the *Globe's* militant photographers and five colleagues and preceded them into the president's private office.

"Quick work, Tommy," warned the reporter.

"Flash?" laconically inquired "Senator Lowry." He was such a famous portraitist that his sitters never gave him time to talk. Hence his habit of speaking while he could. He prepared his flash-powder. [Pg 151]

"Yep!" and the reporter nodded.

The others also unlimbered their cameras. The *Globe* man threw open the door.

The president was angrily haranguing the reporters.

"Mr. Goodchild," said the *Globe* man, "look pleasant!"

Mr. Goodchild turned quickly and opened his mouth.

Bang! went, the flash-powder.

"Hel—" shrieked Mr. Goodchild.

"—p!" said the pious young *Journal* man, with an air of completing the presidential speech. A good editor is worth his weight in pearls.

The photographers' corps retreated in good order and record time.

"For the third and last time will you tell us why you won't let your daughter marry Mr. Rutgers!" asked the *Globe*.

"No."

"Then will you tell us why you won't let Mr. Rutgers marry your daughter?"

Mr. Goodchild was conservative to the last. Too many people who needed money had talked to him in the borrower's tone of voice. He could not grasp the new era. He said, "You infernal blackmailer—"

"Sir," cut in the *Globe* man, with dignity, "you are positively insulting! Be nice to the other reporters. I thank you for the interview!" He bowed and left the office, followed by all the others except the *Evening Post* man, who, unfortunately, had never been able to rid himself of the desire to get the facts. It was partly his editor, but mostly the absence of a sense of humor.

"I think, Mr. Goodchild, that you'd better give me an official statement. I'll give the Associated Press man a copy, and that will go to all the papers." [Pg 152]

"But I don't want to say anything," protested Mr. Goodchild, who always read the *Post's* money page.

"The other reporters will say it for you. I think you'd better."

"He's right, Mr. Goodchild," said the vice-president.

"But what the dickens can I say?" queried Mr. Goodchild, helplessly, not daring to look out of the window for fear of seeing the sandwiches.

"If I were you," earnestly advised the *Post* man, "I'd tell the truth."

"What do you mean?"

"Say why you won't let your daughter—"

"It's preposterous!"

"Say it; but also say why it is preposterous."

Two directors of the bank came in. They were high in high finance. In fact, they *were* High Finance. They therefore knew only the newspapers of an older generation, as they had proven by their testimony before a Congressional Committee. The older director looked at Mr. Goodchild and began:

"Goodchild, will you tell me why—"

"You, too?" interrupted Mr. Goodchild, reproachfully but respectfully. "First the reporters and now—"

The directors gasped.

"You didn't—actually—talk—for—*publication*?"

They stared at him incredulously.

"No. But I'm thinking of giving out a carefully prepared statement—"

The higher of the high financiers, with the masterfulness that made him richer every panic, assumed supreme command. He turned to the *Post* man and said: "I'm surprised to see you here. Your paper used to be decent. Mr. Goodchild has nothing to say."

[Pg 153]

"But—" protested the anguished father of Grace Goodchild.

"You haven't!" declared \$100,000,000.

"I have nothing to say!" meekly echoed one-tenth of one hundred.

The *Post* man walked out with a distinctly editorial stride. He began to envy the yellows and their vulgar editors, as all *Post* men must at times.

Mr. Goodchild's efforts to suppress the publication of his family affairs were in vain. He unfortunately sought to argue over the telephone with the owners.

The owners spoke to the editors.

"It's *News!*" the editors pointed out.

"It's *News,*" the owners regretfully explained to the bank president.

"But it's a crime against decency," said Mr. Goodchild.

"You are right. It's a damned shame. But it's *News!*" said the owners, and hung up.

Mr. Goodchild summoned his lawyer. The lawyer looked grave. He recognized the uselessness of trying to stop the newspapers, and realized that there would be no fat fees, even if he were otherwise successful. He tried to frighten H. R., but was referred to Max Onthemaker, Esquire.

Max Onthemaker, Esquire, was in heaven. He finally had butted into polite society! From the Bowery to Wall Street! At last he was opposed by the very best. A lawyer is known by his opponents!

Mr. Lindsay protested with quite unprofessional heat. It was an outrage.

"*Amare et sapere vix deo conceditur,*" Mr. Onthemaker solemnly reminded the leader of the corporation bar. "Also, dear Mr. Lindsay, I am ready to accept service of any paper you may see fit to honor us with. My client means to fight to the bitter end."

[Pg 154]

"Yes, in the newspapers!" bitterly said the eminent Mr. Lindsay through his clenched teeth.

"And with sandwiches! When we ask for bread you give us a stone. But we give you a sandwich. There's no ground for criminal action in view of the public's frame of mind toward the money power. But if you will sue us for one million dollars damages I'll name my forthcoming baby after you."

Mr. Lindsay hung up with violence, mistaking the telephone-holder for Mr. Onthemaker's cranium.

[Pg 155]

XIII

The reporters of the conservative journals sought H. R. later in the day—simply because the reporters for the live newspapers did. The system was to blame. A daily paper may eschew vulgarity, but it must not be beaten. By using better grammar and no adjectives they intelligently show they are never sensational.

The newspaper-men confronted H. R. eagerly. It was the day's big story. They asked him about it.

He said to them, very simply, "I love her!"

They wrote it down. He waited until they had finished. Then he went on:

"She is the most beautiful girl in the world—to me. Don't forget that—to *me!*"

Those two words would prevent two million sneers from the other most beautiful girls in the world who at that moment happened to reside in New York. Indeed, all his words would be read aloud to young men by said two million coral lips. Perfect Cupid's bows. She was beautiful—to *him!*

"Her parents oppose my suit," went on H. R., calmly.

"Is this a free country," interjected Max Onthemaker, vehemently, "or are we in Russia? Has Wall Street established morganatic marriages in this Republic, or—"

[Pg 156]

H. R. held up a quieting hand. Max Onthemaker smiled at the rebuke. Two reporters had taken down his remarks.

"I have told her parents that I propose to marry Miss Goodchild—peacefully. Get that straight, please. Peacefully! I am a law-abiding citizen. She is very beautiful. But I am willing to wait—a few weeks."

"Yes. But the sandwiches," began a reporter who entertained hopes of becoming a Public Utility Corporation's publicity man.

H. R. stopped him with an impressive frown. He cleared his throat.

The reporters felt it coming.

"What I have done—" he began.

"Yes! Yes!"

"—is merely the employment for the first time in history of *psychological sabotage!*"

The reporters, now having the head-line, rushed off. All except one, who whispered to H. R.'s counsel:

"What in blazes *is* sabotage? How do you spell it?"

"Quit your joking," answered Max. "You know very well what it is. Isn't he a wonder? Psychological sabotage!"

The newspapers gave it space in proportion to the extent of their Wall Street affiliations. The *Evening Post*, having none, came out with an editorial on "Psychological Sabotage." It held up H. R. as a product of the times, made inevitable by T. Roosevelt. The *World* editorialized on "The Wall Street Spirit *versus* Love"; the *Times* wrote about "The Ethics of Modern Courtship"; and the *Sun* about "The Decay of Manners under the Present Administration and its Mexican Policy." The *American's* editorial was "Intelligent Eugenics and Unintelligent Wealth."

[Pg 157]

But all of them quoted "Psychological Sabotage." This made the Socialist papers espouse the cause of H. R.

The *Globe*, however, beat them all. It offered to supply to the young couple, free of charge, a complete kitchen-set and the services of a knot-tier. It printed the names and addresses of sixteen clergymen, two rabbis, three aldermen, and the Mayor of the City of New York.

The Public Sentiment Corps copied two hundred and thirty-eight letters prepared by the boss, praising and condemning H. R. and Mr. Goodchild. This compelled the newspapers that received the letters to run Grace's portrait daily—a new photograph each time.

As for Grace herself, crowds followed her. She could not go into a restaurant without making all heads turn in her direction. People even stopped dancing when they saw her. And six of New York's bluest-blooded heiresses became her inseparable companions. They also had their pictures printed.

Grace hated all this notoriety. She said so, at times. But her friends soothed her and developed the habit of looking pleasantly at cameras.

H. R. on the third day sent all the clippings to Grace with beautiful flowers and a note:

For your sake!

One of Grace's friends asked to be allowed to keep the note. It reminded her, she said, of the early Christians; also of the days of knighthood.

The commercial phase of the mission of the Society of American Sandwich Artists had become in the meanwhile a matter of real importance to the business world. Business men, not being artists, are stupid because they deal with money-profits, and they are imitative because money-making in the ultimate analysis is never original. When the merchants of New York perceived that Fifth Avenue had sanctified sandwiching by paying cash for it, and that the better shops elsewhere had perforce resorted to it, they accepted it as one of the conditions of modern merchandising. It did not become a fad, but worse—an imagined necessity and, as such, an institution. The little Valiquet-made statuettes of the Ultimate Sandwich sold by the thousands, greatly adding to the personal assets of the secretary and treasurer of the society. And what New York did, other cities wished to do.

[Pg 158]

Then the blow fell!

On the same day that H. R. sent his early Christian message to Grace, Andrew Barrett reported that while some of the streets were almost impassable for the multitude of sandwiches, the greater part of the latter, alas! were *non-union men!*

"They are using their porters and janitors to carry boards," said Andrew Barrett, bitterly. "I tell you, H. R., this is a crisis!"

H. R., thinking of Grace, nodded absently and said, "Send for Onthemaker."

Max came on the run. Nearly three days had elapsed without a front-page paragraph for him.

Barrett told him about the crisis. Their idea had been stolen and utilized by unscrupulous merchants who were sandwiching without permission and using scabs.

[Pg 159]

"I get you," said Max Onthemaker. Then he turned to the chief and told him:

"H. R., you've got to do something to make George G. Goodchild sue you for a million dollars." He had drawn and kept ready for use sixty-three varieties of restraining orders, writs, etc.

"What's that got to do with our—" began Andrew Barrett, impatiently.

"Certainly!" cut in Mr. Onthemaker. "We must fight Capital with its own weapon. The Money Power is great on injunctions. I wish to say that when it comes to injunctions I've got Wall Street gasping for breath and—"

"Yes, but what about the scabs? Can't you stop 'em?" persisted Barrett.

The future of the Barrett Itinerant Advertising Agency was at stake.

"Sure! We can hire strong-arm—"

"No!" said H. R., decisively.

Andrew Barrett, who had begun to look hopeful, frowned at his leader's negative, and said, desperately, "Something has got to be done!"

When human beings say "Something" in that tone of voice they mean dynamite by proxy.

"Certainly!" agreed H. R., absently, his mind still on Grace.

Andrew Barrett stifled a groan. He whispered to Max, "It's the girl!"

Max looked alarmed, then hopeful. Grace was almost as much News as H. R. himself.

Andrew Barrett turned to H. R., and said, reproachfully:

"Here we've made sandwiching what it is, and these infernal tightwads—" [Pg 160]

"That's the word, Barrett," cut in H. R. "Go to it, my son!"

"How do you mean?" asked Barrett.

"Advertise in all the papers, morning and evening."

Young Mr. Barrett stared at him, then he shook his head, tapped it with his knuckles, and confessed: "Solid!"

"*Give me a pencil!*" said H. R. It sounded like "Fix bayonets!"

"Nothing," Mr. Onthemaker permitted himself to observe, judicially, "is so conducive to front-page publicity as intelligent violence. This is not a strike, but a cause. Look at the militants—"

"There is something in that," admitted A. Barrett.

"There is something," said H. R., gently, "in everything, even in Max's cranium. But, this is not a matter of principle, but of making money."

"But if you first establish—"

"No," interrupted H. R. "If you make money, the principle establishes itself. The situation does not call for a flash of inspiration, but for common sense. Listen carefully: Nothing is so timid as Capital!"

He looked at them as if further talk were redundant, superfluous, unnecessary, a waste of time, and an insult.

"Well?" said Barrett, forgetting himself and speaking impatiently.

"Utilize it. Treat it as you would a problem in mathematics. You start with an axiom. Build on it. Capital is timid. Therefore, people who have money never do anything original; that is to say, venturesome; that is to say, courageous. All new enterprises are begun and carried through by people who have no money of their own to lose. I, single-handed, could defeat an army commanded by Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, and U. S. Grant, if I could put into the pockets of each of the enemy's private soldiers six dollars in cash. No man likes to be killed with money in his clothes. Money is fear! Fear is unreasoning. I am opposed to injecting fear into the situation. No, sir; instead, we must capitalize another human force. Have this printed. Big blank margin. All the papers." [Pg 161]

He gave them what he had written:

TO THE PUBLIC

We are Union Men but we are for Peace.

We do not hate scabs: we pity them!

We do *not* pity Tightwads who make scabs possible.

We made Sandwiching an Art, also an Honorable Occupation.

We feed our hungry men out of our Hunger Fund. Those who work support those who can't, until they in turn find work.

We ask for living wages, but also for the respect of the public.

Our Emblem is the Sign of the Ultimate Sandwich.

Every time you see a Sandwich-Board without it you may be sure it belongs to a merchant who skimps his Advertising Appropriation.

If he skimps in that, what won't he skimp in?

How about the *quality* of his goods and his *values*?

We advertise the High-class Trade, honest advertisers who skimp in nothing to please the public.

No merchant can misrepresent his goods through us.

We do not Advertise Frauds nor Misers.

[Pg 162]

We could frighten off the Poor Men whose hunger makes scabs of them.

We would have the approval of the Labor Organizations and of the thinking public.

But we are for the Law!

They can join our Union if they wish.

There is no Initiation Fee.

There is no compulsion to join.

They are American Citizens!

So Are We!

The Tightwad Merchant may not be Dishonest. But—

The Public Must Judge—Calmly.

Look for the Ultimate Sandwich in all signs!

American Society of Sandwich Artists.

H. R.,

Sec.

WE NEVER SOLICIT SUBSCRIPTIONS!

Andrew Barrett read it. His jaw dropped and he stared at H. R. Then he declared with conviction:

"Next to the Gettysburg address, this! WE—NEV-ER—SO-LI-CIT—SUB-SCRIP-TIONS! Where does it all come from?"

H. R. solemnly pointed to the ceiling of his office, meaning thereby, like most Americans, heaven. Max Onthemaker looked at him dubiously, the Deity being extra-judicial. Then he shook his head uncertainly. History had told of Peter the Hermit, Mohammed, and others. It was a familiar hypothesis.

The public, when it read in the newspapers that these poor men did not believe in killing scabs, but hated tightwads and never asked for subscriptions, unmistakably and unreservedly espoused their cause. The man who skimped was the common foe of the free citizen. They wrote letters to the newspapers.

[Pg 163]

So did the Public Sentiment Corps.

To hate tightwads and never to ask for subscriptions were admirable American traits. Christian merchants and even heretics in trade called them Virtues!

Big business took the trouble to tell the reporters that this was the kind of labor organization everybody could approve of. It was a check to Socialism. Big business believes in some kinds of checks.

The labor organizations could not condemn a union. They said they also were for peace and against the wretches who capitalized the hunger of their fellows.

In twenty-four hours the scab-users surrendered!

More clippings for Grace.

The Society of American Sandwich Artists prudently leased three more offices and prepared for the rush. It came. Orders poured in from scores of merchants. The premises were so crowded with men both with and without sandwich-boards that the other tenants complained.

The agent of the Allied Arts Building requested H. R. to vacate. He requested it three times an hour, from nine to six.

"The other tenants object to your sandwiches," the agent explained to H. R.

"Let 'em move out. We'll take the whole building—at a fair concession.

"Move out yourself!" shrieked the agent.

"See our lawyer," said H. R., and turned his back on the agent.

The agent called on Mr. Onthemaker.

[Pg 164]

"Fifty thousand dollars!" said Max.

The agent fled, holding his watch in place.

In the mean time the treasury of the society was growing apace. H. R. transferred his account. He now deposited the funds with the National Bank of the Avenue.

The president, Mr. Wyman, told Mr. Goodchild about it. Mr. Goodchild, who had turned red as H. R.'s name was mentioned by a highly esteemed colleague, looked thoughtful—he might have had the account.

[Pg 165]

XIV

In the very hour of his great success H. R. suddenly was thus confronted by the greatest menace to a political career—wealth!

In one morning's mail he received three hundred and eighty-four offers to become the advertising Napoleon of national concerns; no limit to the advertising appropriations. He added up the aggregate offers of salary and maximum commissions.

His income, if he accepted all the offers, would amount to \$614,500 per annum.

So great is the danger and so widely recognized is it that nobody is worthy of respect until he is threatened by wealth with wealth.

Should H. R. accept greatness to-day and let to-morrow bring the littleness?

He did not reply to his correspondents. He thus went up in their estimation. To refuse to take money is something. To refuse even to refuse it is everything!

He prepared a memorandum containing all the offers he had received, with the sum total of same, and sent the originals of the letters and telegrams to Mr. Goodchild.

His only comment, in careless lead-pencil, was what it should be:

"Not enough!"

He knew Mr. Goodchild would speak about it. How could Mr. Goodchild help it? Didn't \$614,500 begin with a \$?

[Pg 166]

But H. R. did not think of what he had not done, not even of what he had done, but of what he would do. Doers of deeds always think that way. To them yesterday is as dead as Cæsar. To-day is settled. To-morrow alone is greater opportunity!

He therefore thought of himself. That made him think of Grace.

He had no illusions about himself, but, what was far more intelligent, he had none about anybody else. He was aware that already the world was divided in their opinion of him. To some he was a humbug, to others a crank; to some a genius, to a few a dangerous demagogue.

People respect what they fear. Fear always puts humanity in the attitude of a rat in a corner. That is why people with a passion for making money naturally think of corners.

To make millions of men follow is to make millions of dollars shake.

But his was an infinitely more difficult problem. How to become the fear of the rich and at the same time be respected by the best element? He had no precedents by which to guide his steps, no example that he might modernize and follow.

He reduced the problem to its simplest form? To bring this about he would preach Brotherhood.

To stop the mouths that thereupon would call him Socialist he would cover his effort.

Then, in the chemical reactions of his mind, something flashed! He would do something to attract the best element. That would bring in the mob. What begins by being fashionable always ends by being popular. Nobody had ever thought of making goodness a fad. Hence, poverty, and therefore wealth!

[Pg 167]

He would take the first step that night.

About 11 P.M. an excited feminine voice, without the slightest trace of Yiddish—indeed, more fashionable than a Fifth Avenue voice ever dared to be—called up, one after another, the city

editors of the best papers and asked:

"Is it true that Grace Goodchild has eloped with Hendrik Rutgers?"

"We had not heard that—"

"It is not true! *It is not true!*" shrieked the voice in the highest pitch of dismay and rang on.

Having been told that it was not true, the city editors, after vainly trying to get the speaker again, honorably called up the Goodchild residence.

Nobody home!

That was enough corroboration for any intelligent man, but the city editors despatched their most reliable reporters to the former residence of the bride. Being prudent men, the editors prepared the photographs, and the head-line was all a matter of final punctuation:

MISS GOODCHILD ELOPES

It remained for the make-up man to put a "!" or a "?" after "ELOPES."

The reporters could not get to either Mr. or Mrs. Goodchild or to H. R. or Grace. The papers therefore did not say that the young people, whose courtship was a Fifth Avenue romance, had eloped. That might not be true. But they printed Grace's photographs and H. R.'s and reviewed H. R.'s meteoric career and called the rumor a rumor. That was common sense.

[Pg 168]

Also, all the newspapers spoke about the Montagues and the Capulets. At about 2.30 A.M. the reporters returned with expurgated versions of Mr. Goodchild's denial. But the pages were cast. The late city editions honorably printed:

Mr. Goodchild, when seen early this morning, denied the rumor.

It was thus, at one stroke, that the nuptials of Grace Goodchild and H. R. were definitely placed among the probabilities. The average New-Yorker now knew it was only a matter of days.

[Pg 169]

XV

H. R. dressed to resemble an undertaker, but wearing a beautiful orchid to show he did not do it for a living, called a taxicab, drove to the Diocesan House and sent in his card to the Bishop of New York.

The Bishop was a judge of cards. He therefore received H. R. in his study instead of the general waiting-room of which the decorative scheme consisted of "In His Name" in old English and therefore safe from perusal. It might as well have been, "Be Brief!"

"How do you do, Bishop Phillipson?" And H. R. held out his hand with such an air of affectionate respect that the Bishop was sure he had confirmed this distinguished-looking young man.

But the head of the diocese has to know more than theology. Therefore the Bishop answered, very politely:

"I am very well, thank you."

"Did you recognize the name?" modestly asked H. R.

"Oh yes," said the Bishop, who recently had read about some meeting in Rutgers Square and therefore remembered Rutgers.

He was a fine figure of a man with clean-cut features and a look of kindness so subtly professional as to keep it from being indiscriminately benevolent; a good-natured man rather than a strong. One might imagine that he made friends easily, but none could visualize him as a Crusader. He was cursed with an orator's voice, sensitive ears, and the love of words.

[Pg 170]

"Perhaps you've read the newspapers? They've been full of me and my doings these many weeks," said H. R., looking intently at the Bishop.

"My dear boy!" expostulated Dr. Phillipson.

"I need your help!" said H. R., very earnestly.

The Bishop knew it! Those to whom you cannot give cheering words and fifty cents are the worst cases. To relieve physical suffering is far easier than to straighten out those tangles that society calls disreputable—after they get into print.

H. R. went on, "I want you to help me to help our church."

"Help you to help our church?" blankly repeated the Bishop. The unexpected always reduces the expectant kind to a mere echo.

"Exactly!" And H. R. nodded congratulatorily. "Exactly! In order that we may stop losing ground!"

There were so many ways in which this young man's words might be taken that his mission remained an exasperating mystery. But the Bishop smiled with the tolerance of undyspeptic age toward over-enthusiastic youth and said kindly:

"Pardon me, but—"

"Pardon *me*," interrupted H. R., "but since it is only the Roman Catholics who are growing—"

"Our figures—" interjected the Bishop, firmly.

"Ah yes, figures of speech. Don't apply to *our* church. The reason is that the Catholics leave out the possessive pronoun. They never say *their* church any more than they say *their* God. Now, why did we build our huge Cathedral?"

[Pg 171]

The Bishop stared at H. R. in astonishment. Then he answered, austere, confining himself to the last question:

"In order to glorify—"

"Excuse me. There already existed the Himalayas. The real object of building cathedrals hollow, I take it, is to fill 'em with the flesh of *living* people. Otherwise we would have made sarcophagi. We Protestants don't bequeath our faith to our posterity; only our pews. They are to-day empty. Hence my business. I, Bishop Phillipson, am a People-Getter."

"You are what?" The Bishop did not frown; his amazement was too abysmal.

"I fill churches. Since this is really a family affair, let us be frank. Of course, you could fill 'em with paper—"

"Paper?"

"Theatrical argot for deadheads, Bishop; people who don't pay, but contribute criticisms of the show. I am here to tell you how to go about the job efficiently."

H. R.'s manner was so earnest, it so obviously reflected his desire to help, that the Bishop could not take offense at the young man's intentions. The words, however, were so much more than offensive that the Bishop said, with cold formality:

"You express yourself in such a way—"

"I'll tell you the reason. Deeds never convert until they are *talked* about. Dynamic words are needed. Ask any business man. I have made a specialty of them. I may add that I am not interested in making money, only in efficiency!"

The Bishop saw plainly that this well-dressed young man with the keen eyes and the resolute chin was neither a lunatic nor an impostor. Therefore the Bishop instantly realized that the young man could not help the Church and equally that the Church could not help the young man. Further talk was a waste of time.

[Pg 172]

"I fear this discussion is fruitless—"

"I wasn't discussing; I was asserting. I am the man who is going to marry Grace Goodchild—"

The Bishop straightened in his chair and looked at H. R. with a new and more personal interest.

"Indeed!" he said, so humanly that it sounded like "Do tell!" Grace was one of his flock. He remembered now that his friends the Goodchilds had been in print lately and that editorials had been written about the young man who proposed to marry the only daughter.

"I promised Grace that I would help our Church—"

To the Bishop these words, which the young man had used before, now had a different meaning. It was no longer an utter stranger, but an eccentric acquaintance; a character, as characterless people call them.

"Yes?" And the Bishop listened attentively.

"I've doped it out—" pursued H. R., earnestly.

"I beg your pardon?" said the Bishop and blushed.

"I have arrived at a logical conclusion," translated H. R. "In short, I have found what will put Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Jews, Parsees, and native-born Americans on the Christian map of New York. And it will not necessitate turning the unoccupied churches into restaurants or vaudeville shows."

H. R. turned his hypnotic look full on the Bishop, who read therein the desire to do.

[Pg 173]

"Thus must have looked HILDEBRAND!" thought the Bishop, in Roman capitals, in spite of himself. On second thought he remembered to characterize the language of Grace Goodchild's fiancé as "bizarre." Experience teaches that it is wisdom to encourage good intentions. This is done by listening.

Since the Bishop was now obviously glad to listen, H. R. said, more earnestly than ever:

"Tell me, Bishop, what is it that is desirable to possess and more desirable to give, elevating, rare beyond words, thrice blessed, and beautiful as heaven itself?"

"Truth!" exclaimed the Bishop, his voice ringing with conviction and the pride of puzzle-solving. Being a human being, he had answered promptly.

H. R. shook his head and smiled forgivingly: "That's only theology; possibly metaphysics. Forget rhetoric and get down to cases. *Truth!* Pshaw! Can you imagine that combination of four consonants and one vowel serving as a political platform or included in any live concern's instructions to salesmen? Never! No, sir. Guess again! I've found it. Rare, picturesque, with great dramatic possibilities and easy to capitalize. It is—"

He paused and looked at the Bishop. The Bishop returned the look fascinatedly. This young man was from another world. What would he say next? And what would whatever he said mean?

"*Charity!*" exclaimed H. R., proudly.

The Bishop's face fell. You almost heard it.

H. R. shook a rigid forefinger at the Bishop's nose and said, in a distinctly vindictive voice:

"*'But the greatest of these is charity!'*"

[Pg 174]

"We always preach—" began the Bishop, defensively.

"That's the trouble. *Don't!* We'll tackle charity by easy steps. We'll begin by the very lowest form, in order to break in American Christians gradually. Feeding the hungry is spectacular and leads to the higher forms. Show people that you will not only fill their bellies, but send the caterer's bills direct to the Lord for payment, and the populace will supply not only the food-receptacles, but the stationery. A great deal," finished H. R., reflectively, "depends upon the right stationery."

"I fear," said the Bishop, uncomfortably, "that we are talking to each other across an impassable gulf."

"Not a bit, Bishop. The human intellect, properly directed, can bridge any chasm. Let us be philosophical." H. R. said this as one who proposes to speak in words of one syllable. "Now, good people—I don't mean *you*, Bishop; you know: *good* people!—always do everything wrong end foremost. Now, what do you, speaking collectively, do to feed the hungry?"

"We support St. George's Kitchens—"

"Ah yes, you astutely work to eliminate poverty by tackling the poor, instead of operating on the rich. You give tickets to the hungry! Think of it—*to the hungry!* Tickets! A green one means a bowl of pea soup; a pink one, a slice of ham; a brown one, a codfish ball. The polychromatics of systematized charity whereby you discourage the increase of a professional pauper class! Tickets! To the hungry! Ouch!"

The Bishop more than once had despaired of solving that very problem. He shook his head sadly rather than rebukingly and said, "I have no doubt that you are a very remarkable young man and very up to date and very hopeful, but in a huge city like New York how can any one solve the problem of helping everybody who really needs—"

[Pg 175]

"By using brains, Bishop Phillipson," cut in H. R., so sternly that the Bishop flushed. But before his anger could crystallize, H. R. continued, challengingly: "Who in New York are in need of charity? Five thousand empty bellies? No. Five million empty souls!"

It was a striking figure of speech. Before the Bishop could say anything H. R. went on, very politely:

"Will you oblige me by torturing the ears?"

"Torturing the ears?" echoed the Bishop in a daze.

"Yes; by listening. Do you hear"—H. R. pointed to a corner of the room—"do you hear a voice from heaven saying, 'Let them that hunger bring a physician's certificate of protracted inanition? You don't? Then there's hope. What I propose to do, Bishop, is to revolutionize the industry.'" H. R. spoke so determinedly that the Bishop could not help forgetting everything else and asking:

"How?"

"By giving the ticket to the full belly; not to the empty. We utilize the machinery already in existence, but the ticket goes to the man who pays twenty-five cents, not to the man who needs or accepts the quarter's worth of food. There are people who would compel a fellow-man made by God after His image to convert himself into a first-trip-to-Europe dress-suit case and paste labels all over himself: *Pauper! Hungry! Wreck!* My tickets will be precious tags marked: *Charitable! Decent! Christian!* I accomplish this by giving to the giver! Success is a matter of labels."

[Pg 176]

"But I can't see—"

"My dear Bishop, everybody acknowledges that it is much nicer to give to those you love than to receive. That is why we are exhorted to love our fellows—that we may love to give to them. It follows that everybody at heart likes to be charitable. Vanity was invented pretty early in history. But it has not been properly capitalized by the Churches. Now, listen to the difference when real

brains are used. Remember that though all is vanity, vanity is not all. Each person who gives twenty-five cents receives a ticket. Since he lives in America, he gets something for something! I have planned a mammoth hunger feast in Madison Square Garden. Each donor from his seat will see with his own eyes a fellow-man eat his quarter."

"But, my dear Mr. Rutgers—"

"I am glad you see it as I do. The ticket-buyer goes to the Garden. He knows his ticket is feeding one man. But he sees ten thousand men eating. He looks for the particular beneficiary of his particular quarter. It might be any one of the ten thousand eaters! Within thirty-seven seconds each donor will feel that his twenty-five cents is feeding the entire ten thousand! Did a quarter of a dollar ever before accomplish so much? Of anybody else," finished H. R., modestly, "I would call that genius!"

The Bishop shook his head violently.

"Do you mean to treat it as a spectacle—"

"What else was the Crucifixion to the priests of the Temple?" asked H. R., sternly.

[Pg 177]

The Bishop waved away with his hand and said, decidedly:

"No! No! Would you compel starving men—"

"To eat?" cut in H. R.

"No; to parade their needs, to vulgarize charity and make it offensive, a stench in the nostrils of self-respecting—"

"Hold on! Charity, reverend sir, is never offensive. The attitude of imperfectly Christianized fellow-citizens makes it a disgrace to show charity, but not to display poverty. The English-speaking races, being eminently practical, lay great stress upon table manners. They treat charity as if it were a natural function of man, and therefore to be done secretly and in solitude. Our cultured compatriots invariably confound modesty with the sense of smell. Etiquette is responsible for infinitely greater evils than vulgarity. Feed the hungry. When you do that you obey God. Feed them *all!*"

"But—"

"That is exactly what I propose to do—with your help: feed all the starving men in New York. Has anybody ever before tried that? *All the starving men!*" He finished, sternly, "Not one shall escape us!"

The Bishop almost shuddered, there was so grimly determined a look on H. R.'s face. Then as his thoughts began to travel along their usual channel he felt vexed. He had patiently endured the disrespectful language of a young man whose point of view differed so irritatingly from that of the earnest men who were laboring to solve the problem. All he had heard was confusing talk, words he could not remember, but left a sting. Time had been spent to no purpose.

"I still," said the Bishop with an effort, "do not see how you solve the problem that has baffled our best minds."

[Pg 178]

"Nobody else could do it," acknowledged H. R., simply. "But I have carefully prepared my plans. They cannot fail. And now you will give me your signature."

"My signature to what?" asked the Bishop in the tone of voice in which people usually say, "Never!" He felt that the interview was ended. A suspicion flashed in his mind that this young man might reply, "To a check!" But he paid H. R. the compliment of instantly dismissing the suspicion. This was, alas! no common impostor.

"To an appeal to New York's better nature," said H. R., enthusiastically. "The masses always follow the classes; if they didn't there wouldn't be classes. Mr. Wyman, of the National Bank of the Avenue, will act as treasurer."

It was the fashionable bank. Stock in demand at seventy-two hundred dollars a share, and all held by Vans.

"Has he—"

"He will," interrupted H. R. so decisively that the Bishop forgot to be annoyed at not being allowed to finish his question. "We shall appeal to all New-Yorkers. Your name must therefore lead the signatures. Much, Bishop Phillipson, depends upon the leader! Of course there will be other clergymen, and leading merchants, and capitalists, and the mayor, and the borough presidents, and the reform leaders, and everybody who is Somebody. They must give the example. Do you not constantly endeavor, yourself, to be an example, reverend sir?"

Before the Bishop could deny this H. R. gave into his hands a book beautifully bound in hand-tooled morocco. The leaves were vellum. On the first page was artistically engrossed:

[Pg 179]

Hunger knows no denomination.

There must not be starving men, women, or children in New York.

LET US FEED ALL THE HUNGRY!

"Here, Bishop Phillipson, is the place at the head of the list. It will be signed by men and women whose names stand for Achievement, Fame, and Disinterestedness."

H. R. held a fountain-pen before him and pursued: "If you sign, I'll feed all the hungry—*all!* Have you ever seen a starving man? Do you know what it is to be hungry?"

The Bishop shook his head at the fountain-pen. He had seen starving men, but he had read about signatures. He could not officially sanction a plan of which he knew so little. No grown man can say that he did not know what he was signing.

"Listen!" commanded H. R., sternly. "Do you hear your Master's voice?"

"Your intentions, I make no doubt, are highly praiseworthy. But your language is so close to blasphemy...."

"All words that invoke God in unrhymed English are so regarded in the United States. Grace would have it that you would sign in Chinese if by so doing it fed the hungry. '*But the greatest of these is charity.*' The reporters are waiting for the list. Everybody else will sign if you head the list."

[Pg 180]

"Of course." And the Bishop's voice actually betrayed the fact that he had been forced into self-defense. "Of course. I should be only too glad to sign if I were certain such an action on my part would actually feed the hungry—"

"*All* the hungry," corrected H. R.

"Even a tenth of the hungry of New York," the Bishop insisted. "But, my dear young man, excellent intentions do not always succeed. Your methods might not commend themselves to men who have made this work the study of a lifetime."

"They have not gone about their work intelligently, for there are still unfed men in New York. I am a practical man, not a theorist. Emotions, respected sir, are all very well to appeal to at vote-getting times, but they are poor things to think with. Now I don't suppose I have devoted more than one hour's thought to this subject, and yet see the difference. *All* the hungry!" In H. R.'s voice there was not the faintest trace of self-glorification nor did his manner show the slightest vanity. Both were calmly matter-of-fact. The Bishop had to have an explanation. So he asked:

"And your—er—quite unemotional and sudden interest in this—er—affair, Mr. Rutgers...."

"You mean, where do I come in?" cut in H. R.

The Bishop almost blushed as he shook his head and explained:

"Rather, your motive in undertaking so difficult...."

"Oh yes. You mean, *why?*"

"Yes," said the Bishop, and looked at H. R. full in the eyes.

"Because I desire to marry Grace Goodchild and I wish to be worthy of her. It is a man's job to jolt New York into a spasm of practical Christianity."

[Pg 181]

The Bishop smiled. After all, this was a boy, and his enthusiasm might make up for what his motive lacked in profundity of wisdom.

"And besides," went on H. R., in a lowered voice, "I hate to think that men can starve when I have enough to eat without earning my food." He smiled shamefacedly.

"My boy!" cried the Bishop, and shook the boy's hand warmly, "I'm afraid you are—"

"Don't call me good, Bishop!"

"I was going to say it, but I won't. Do you think you can do what you propose?"

"I know it!" And H. R. looked at Dr. Phillipson steadily.

The Bishop looked back. He was no match for H. R.

"I will sign!" said the Bishop.

[Pg 182]

XVI

H. R. walked slowly to his office. Spring was in the air. The sky was very blue and the air sparkled with sun-dust. Life thrilled in waves. The breeze sang, as it does at times in the city. It had not the harps of the trees to strum on, but it made shift with the corners of the houses. Hand in hand with the breeze from the south came the joy of living that, after all, is merely the joy of

loving.

The soul of God's beautiful world—light, heat, beauty, love—percolated into the soul of Hendrik Rutgers and filled it—filled it full.

It called for the One Woman in songs—the same songs the breeze was humming.... Ah, the encouragement of the wind! It bade him take her! It told him exactly whither the breeze was going, whither he should carry her in his arms. It whispered to him the place where he might lay down his burden!

He walked on, head erect, chest inflated, fists clenched. He would take her from the world and make her his world. Their world!—his and hers; his first, then hers. After that they would share it equally.

The breeze sang on.

As he crossed Madison Square he was made aware that the sparrows also had heard the song and, phonograph-like, were repeating it. A little shriller, but the same song. Ten thousand sparrows—and each thought it was original! And the little pale-green leaves were nodding approval. And the azure smile of the sky was benignantly telling all creation to go ahead—as it was in the beginning, as it would be in the end.

[Pg 183]

He loved her! He would love her even if she were not the most beautiful girl in all the round world. He would love her if she were penniless; even if her father were his best friend. He loved her and he loved his love of her. Her eyes were two skies that smiled more bluey than God's one. Her hair had the rust of gold and the dust of sun, and radiated light and glints of love. From her wonderful lips came, in the voice of the flowers, the one command that he, a hater of slaves, would obey, gratefully kneeling. And the lips said it, flower-like, in silence!

She was not there to be loved. But he loved her, and because he loved her he loved everybody, everything. Even his fellow-men.

They also should love! All of them! Love to love and love to live!

Did they?

He looked for the first time at his fellow-men on the park benches.

He saw sodden faces, reptile-like sunning themselves, warming their skins; no more.

They were men without money.

They therefore were men without eyes, without ears, without tongues. They therefore were men without love. Everything had been cleanly excised by the great surgeon, Civilization!

A wonderful invention, money. To think that puny man had, by means of that ingenious device, thwarted not only Nature, but God Himself!

[Pg 184]

If money had not been invented, there would not be great cities to be loveless in!

But those on the park benches, lizard-like sunning themselves, were tramps. The pedestrians had money. They, therefore, must have love.

He looked at them and saw that what they had was their hands in their pockets. Doubtless it was to keep their money there. By so doing they did not have to sit on park benches and fail to see the sky and the buds, and fail to hear the birds and the breeze.

And yet, as he looked he saw on their faces the same blindness and the same deafness.

On the benches sat immortal souls drugged with misery. On the paths walked men asleep with Self.

He alone was alive and awake!

The appalling solitude of a great city was all about him. He was the only living man in New York!

And Grace Goodchild was the only woman in the world! He loved her. He loved everybody. He wished to give, give, give!

"You'll be fed!" he said to the park benches.

"You'll feed em!" he told the sidewalks.

"I'll marry you!" he wirelessed to Grace.

"You," he said to all New York, "will pay for every bit of it!"

He walked into his office, frowning. Andrew Barrett was there.

"Come with me," H. R. told him, and led the way into the private office.

He sat down at his desk, brushed away a lot of letters, and said to his aide:

"Barrett, I've got a man's job this time."

Sandwiching for banks that had deposits of over one hundred millions appealed to Andrew

Barrett. And the Standard Oil and the Steel Trust, also, held possibilities. After the S. A. S. A. got those he would go into business for himself. [Pg 185]

"Who is it?" he asked, eagerly.

"Grace Goodchild!" answered H. R., absently.

"Oh, I thought—"

H. R. started. "What? Oh! You are thinking of business. Well, I'm going to put New York on the map at one fell swoop."

Andrew Barrett beamed. At last, millions! All New York using sandwiches at regular rates!

H. R. looked at his lieutenant and smiled forgivingly. After all, it was not Andrew's fault that the spring was not in his soul.

"Barrett, men and women in all civilized communities desire three things. All of them begin with a B. Can you guess?"

"Not I!" answered Barrett, with diplomatic self-depreciation. There are questions whose answers gain you mortal enmity by depriving the questioner of the greatest of all pleasures.

"Bread, beauty, and bunco. You satisfy all the natural wants of humanity by supplying these three. Now men pay for their necessities with whatever coin happens to be current. I have sometimes thought of a state of society in which payment need not be made in interchangeable labor units, but in the self-satisfaction of accomplishment. I have even dreamed," he finished, sternly, "of making goodness fashionable!"

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed Barrett, in indescribable awe.

H. R. shook his head gloomily. "The trouble," he said, bitterly, "is that it is so damned easy to be good, so obviously intelligent, so natural! Men are bad, I firmly believe, because badness is so roundabout and expensive. How else can you explain it? Society, since money was invented, has craved for expensive things. Society is, in truth, expense." [Pg 186]

"Say, Chief, I don't get the dope about goodness being easy."

"Probably not; it is too obvious. The early Christians died gladly. It was good form. Dying for God ceased to be fashionable. Hence universal suffrage. To die for God merely means to live for God. Do you see?"

"No. The Christian part bothers me."

"Let us be heathen, then. The Spartan mother loved her sons. Sent them to battle saying, *With your shield or on it!* The axiom of the locality is the fashion of the place. To die bravely in Sparta was to be fashionable. If I can make goodness fashionable I'll do something that is very easy and very difficult. If men were not such damned fools it would be so restful to be wise."

"Yes, H. R., but human nature—"

"Exactly. We go against human nature always. God gave to men the precious gift of fear in order that they might overcome it. Man's fear to-day is to be good. Once upon a time men feared hell. It is now the fashion for Americans to think, *To hell with hell!*"

Andrew Barrett shook his head dubiously. He was not really interested in abstractions. But he desired to be on good terms with his chief. The best way to be nice to a man is to put up a weak argument. He began, feebly defending, "But there must be some people—"

"It is perfectly proper to be selfish if you are alone. It is stupid to be selfish when you are one of a group. Therefore, my inveterately young friend and typical compatriot, we must do something for nothing. Tip off the papers." [Pg 187]

Barrett shook his head. "I don't get you," he confessed, sadly.

"Few people do when you tell them they have to do something and not be paid for it. To-morrow and the day after our men must display a new sandwich for the cause for two hours." He paused, then he finished, sternly, "Tell them I said so!"

"I will," hastily said Barrett, only too glad to shift the responsibility.

"You might request the regular advertisers to pay full time, just the same."

"You bet I will! And what will the boards say?"

"Let me have your pencil," said H. R., and he wrote:

NEXT WEEK

THE MEN WHO HAVE MADE

NEW YORK

**THE EMPIRE CITY OF
GOD'S OWN COUNTRY
WILL FEED
ALL THE HUNGRY
WHO HAVE NO MONEY**

O. K.
H. R.,
Sec.

[Pg 188]

"There!" said H. R.

Andrew Barrett read it. "If it was anybody else—" he muttered.

"Convey to your reporter friends that this is the biggest story of the year. Particularly impress upon them that it is a secret!"

"I'll impress that on them, all right," promised Barrett, with profound sincerity. "It is really pleasant not to have to lie."

H. R. rose and said: "I must get the other names. I have begun with the Bishop. And he showed Barrett the signature of Dr. Phillipson.

"Why his?" asked Barrett.

"I expect him to officiate at my wedding. Also, he is a Conservative, and Wall Street is for him, strong. Don't you see? Get the sandwiches ready."

H. R. no longer bothered with details. He had discovered that by resolutely expecting people to do things, people did them. Every eight hundred and thirty-one years a man is born who can throw upon his fellow-men the yoke of responsibility so that it stays put.

He decided that it would look well in print to play up the non-sectarianism of the affair. He would therefore have the prominent people meet in the Granite Presbyterian Church, attracting the Presbyterians who otherwise might have objected to Bishop Phillipson's leadership. But the meeting would be presided over by Bishop Barrows, a Methodist. Bishop Phillipson would agree to this. Did not his name come first in the stirring call to the metropolis?

But, of course, to give to the project an attractive and, indeed, a compelling interest he would resort to the great American worship of bulk. It must be big. It must be the biggest ever!

[Pg 189]

XVII

He had no trouble in getting the other names. The bankers were easy. He told each that the cash was to be handled by a committee of bankers, thereby insuring efficient management. If Jones, of the small Nineteenth National, signed, Dawson, of the big Metropolitan, must do likewise or be convicted of lack of sympathy with a popular cause. The "Dawson party," comprising, as it did, the richest men in the world, needed popularity, Heaven knew. He also told the bankers that they would not have to pay out anything. It won them. He clenched it by comparing charity to the income tax.

Yes, he did!

"Nobody," he argued, "objects to an income tax that embraces *everybody*! The great good of such a tax is to make every man feel that he is supporting the government and to see to it that the government is spending his money wisely. The income tax should lead to more intelligent citizenship."

Each banker agreed heartily to that.

"The same with charity. Compel everybody to be charitable, the clerk equally with the president, that the burden may fall not on the rich, but on the many. Just sign here, will you, please? Thank you."

The other signatures were equally easy to get. The so-called experts in charity work always give *their* reasons. Result: \$.00.

[Pg 190]

On parting, H. R. told each signer the same thing:

"The reporters will be present at the meeting. They may not stay till the very end. All they want is an advance copy of the speeches and the names of the people in the first three rows. The meeting begins at eight-thirty sharp!"

He did not urge a single signer to attend, but at eight-twenty every seat in the Granite Presbyterian Church was filled by prominent people who hated reporters and their loathsome prying into a man's private affairs.

It was a distinguished gathering, for H. R. had picked out nobody whose name was not familiar to readers of newspaper advertisements, society news, and government anti-corporation suits. Entire pews were filled with Success in Art, Literature, Science, Commerce, Finance, and Christianity.

On the stage, formerly called chancel, were seated four bank presidents, four bishops, four merchants, four social leaders, four great writers, four great editors, four great painters, four great landlords, four great statesmen; in short, four great everything.

H. R. rose and said: "Before introducing the chairman I desire the uninvited to retire instantly. The invitations were sent exclusively to the men who have made New York what it is!"

Would you believe it? Not one man retired. And they all knew what New York was, too!

They really thought New York was something to be proud of.

"Those who do not rightfully belong here will retire!" repeated H. R. so threateningly that each man instantly sweated mucilage and remained glued to his seat. [Pg 191]

"I present our temporary chairman, Bishop Barrows."

"The meeting will come to order," said the Bishop.

Profound silence reigned. This so flabbergasted the reverend chairman that he fidgeted. Then he offered a prayer. When he had finished and the audience had drawn the customary long breath that follows "Amen" the chairman hesitated.

"I'll tell 'em why we are here, if you wish," whispered H. R. Then, exactly as though the Bishop had acquiesced, he said, "Very well, Bishop," and he obediently arose.

The Bishop repeated, hypnotically, "Mr. Rutgers will tell you why we are here."

H. R. bowed to him and to the congregation. The reporters woke up. Here was something better than oratory or facts: News. This explains why the newspapers give more space to who speaks than to what is said.

"Fellow New-Yorkers! We have been accused of provincialism. They tell us we don't care for the rest of the country. This is not true. We do care. We ought to: we own it! We supply to the rest of the country the money to be prosperous with, the paintings to be artistic with, the magazines to be cultivated with, the gowns to be beautiful with, and a place to spend money in, unsurpassed in the world. We have built the best hotels in the universe expressly to accommodate the people that hate New York. This is the soul of hospitality. New York leads. Other cities follow. They copy our clothes, our dances, our financiering, our barbers, our sandwiches, and the uniform of our street-cleaners. Our superiority is not only acknowledged, but resented. We have decided to do something that never before has been attempted, not even by automobile manufacturers. Let other cities copy us if they will. We are going to feed all the hungry who have no money! We are going to do it on the New York plan completely, intelligently, efficiently, and, above everything, picturesquely. You have seen the sandwich announcements?" [Pg 192]

They had. For two days all New York had seen them and all New York had talked about them, for the announcements had taken on the aspect of a puzzle. The answer was now expected. On vaudeville stages shining stars were at that very moment volunteering humorous solutions through their noses.

"We propose to do it by means of improved tickets. No man shall buy more than one. The millionaire and the minister, the merchant and the mut, all will help. And all will help equally that each may benefit his soul in like degree without injury to any pocketbook. And, gentlemen, we are going to do it in an entirely new way."

Everybody stared intently at H. R.

An entirely new way!

"Nobody will be allowed to buy more than one ticket. The price will be twenty-five cents! That sum will buy one Ideal Meal. The ticket not only will entitle the holder thereof to admission to Madison Square Garden, but it will also carry a coupon worth ten thousand dollars in cash!"

He paused. The assemblage went pale. Hands were seen hastily buttoning up coats.

"I personally will give the money," said H. R., sternly. [Pg 193]

A great sigh of relief soughed its way himward.

"The meal will be a revelation to those who talk about the high cost of living and will conclusively prove the advantage of being permitted to do business in a large way without ill-advised interference by a grandfatherly government. It thus will have an important bearing on current legislation. Each ticket-buyer will see with his own eyes the entire journey of the quarter from the pocket to the empty stomach. Also the coupon attached to every ticket, worth ten thousand dollars in cash, will be a reward not of charity alone, but of the combination of charity and

brains."

The audience fidgeted. They did not believe it. It was too remarkable. But, anyhow, it was the orator's own money.

"There will be," pursued H. R., accusingly, "no waste, no scientific un-Christianity, no half-baked philanthropy, no nonsense. On one day next week the sun will set on our city, and not one man, woman, or child will go to bed hungry, unless it is by his doctor's orders. All the hungry who have no money shall be fed. As for the coupon, I have myself already contributed the necessary funds to take care of that."

Instead of feeling irritation at the repetition, they looked at him with a respect not often seen in a church.

"It has never been attempted. I realize that we cannot make lazy men prosperous nor put in brains where they were left out by a wise Providence; but we are going to abolish hunger for one day, and then see what we can do to make conditions improve permanently. And the burden will be shared alike by all—nobody more than twenty-five cents."

A look of resolve came over the faces of the entire audience. It was an experiment worth trying! [Pg 194]

"Gentlemen," added H. R., sternly, "we are going to call the bluff of the anarchistic labor agitators!"

A storm of applause burst from the audience. H. R. held up a hand.

"In giving, it is always wise to know to whom you are giving. The Society of American Sandwich Artists, with the aid of those who have made New York what it is, pledges itself to see to it that the meals find the proper bellies. There is no such thing as scientific charity any more than there is unscientific poverty. Nobody hates to give, but everybody wishes to give wisely. I guarantee that nobody who has money to buy food with will be fed at our expense. *I guarantee this!*"

"*HOW?*" burst from three hundred and eighteen throats.

"That is our secret. I may add that the coupon, worth exactly ten thousand dollars in cash, is not a lottery scheme. Gentlemen, I count upon your cooperation. I thank you." He bowed, modestly stepped back and nodded to Bishop Barrows. "Adjourn," he whispered.

"I have a few—" began Dr. Barrows, protestingly.

"Adjourn. The reporters will print them from your manuscript."

"But—"

H. R. took out his handkerchief and wiped his cool, unfevered brow. He had foreseen the chairman's speech. Max Onthemaker, who had been waiting for the signal, jumped to his feet and yelled:

"I move we adjourn!"

"Second the motion!" shrieked Andrew Barrett from a rear pew.

The Bishop had to put the motion. Not having been called upon to pledge money, the assembly decided it was prudent to get out before the situation changed. The motion was unanimously carried. [Pg 195]

H. R. received the reporters in the vestry-room. He even shook hands with them. Then he said, as usual giving them the "lead" for their stories:

"These are the points to emphasize: The tickets are unlike any other tickets ever invented. They cost twenty-five cents. They will carry a coupon. To a person with brains that same coupon will be worth ten thousand dollars in cash. Chance has nothing to do with it. Brains! In any event, the twenty-five cents will buy one Ideal Meal. The menu will be prepared by the Menu Commission, composed of competent persons, which is another novelty in commissions—the highest-paid chefs in New York, the proprietors of the three best restaurants, the three leading diet specialists, and three experts on hunger. No food fads and no disguised advertisements of breakfast foods or nerve-bracers. What Dr. Eliot's Five-foot Book-shelf did for literature the S. A. S. A. Ideal Hunger-Appeaser will do for the masses. That menu inaugurates a revolution without bloodshed, vulgar language, or the destruction of fundamental institutions. The low price of our meal is made possible by the application of automobile-factory methods and the fact that we have no profit to make. Play fair with the restaurant-keeper, boys, and make this strong:

"The S. A. S. A., after epoch-making experiments, psychological and physiological, has succeeded in making fraudulent hunger impossible. We have a cash-detector which will enable us to discard any applicant who can pay for his food, and our alcoholic thirst-tester automatically eliminates booze-fighters. The mammoth hunger feast will be held at Madison Square Garden. Each ticket admits the buyer to the feast—as an eye-witness that he may see where his money has gone. The coupon will be detached by the ticket-taker at the entrance and returned to the ticket-holder. Uncharitable people who have no brains need not buy a ticket. [Pg 196]

"No shop, church, or bank will offer the tickets for sale; only our own sellers in person and only one to each customer. We are not going to pay anybody twenty thousand dollars. That's flat! The

names of the members of our various commissions will be announced later." He nodded dismissingly. Then he seemed to remember that these were gentlemen. He said: "My secretary, who has taken down my remarks in shorthand, will give you typewritten copies of same. Use what you will. Only correct my English, won't you? I'm not literary."

That made them his friends. But the *Tribune* man said:

"I'm from Missouri and I'm not going to print anything unless—"

"I don't expect you to print news. These gentlemen know I receive no salary. They know as well as I do that my sole object is to win the hand of Grace Goodchild."

The *Journal* man, who was sweet on the "Advice to the Love-Lorn" editress, feverishly wrote the head-line,

ALL FOR LOVE!

"I needn't say to you," went on H. R., with a look that made the reporters respect his reticence, "that if I were an advertising man the publicity methods that I have introduced would have made me richer than I am. *What in hell would I do with more money? Answer me that!*"

[Pg 197]

The *Tribune* man answered by turning pale. The others looked uneasy. When a well-dressed young man asks that question in New York there can be but two answers: Bloomingdale or Standard Oil.

H. R. was going to marry a rich banker's only daughter. He was therefore no lunatic.

H. R. was thenceforth regarded by the newspapers, and therefore by the public, as a fabulously rich man. This made him definitely Front Page. No other man ever became chronically that without committing murder or playing for the labor vote.

[Pg 198]

XVIII

All the morning papers spread themselves on the story and thereby gained the respect of those present at the meeting whose names were mentioned. Only one of the journals featured Grace Goodchild. Two dwelt strongly on the ten-thousand-dollar coupon and on the fact that the wealth of those present at the Granite Presbyterian Church aggregated \$3,251,280,000. One pure-food featurer played up the ideal meal, and two the hope that at last charity would be discriminating.

At 9.14 A.M. messages began to rain down on H. R. They came by livened youth, by telephone, and by secretaries.

"Why," asked the Fitz-Marlton, "was not our chef considered enough? Why drag in others?"

"How does it happen that our fifty-thousand-dollars-a-year Piccolini, who possesses eighteen decorations from crowned heads, is not one of the Public Menu Commission? Don't you want the best?" This came from the Vandergilt in writing that looked like ornamental spaghetti.

"Please call at your earliest convenience and see what we give for \$17.38 in the way of a substantial breakfast," laconically invited Herr Bummerlich of the Pastoral.

[Pg 199]

Caspar Weinpuslacher called in person. He asked, reproachfully:

"How it comes, Mr. Rutchers, that your best friend—"

"Weinie," interrupted H. R., "this will cost you two thousand five hundred tickets for your thirty-cent meal. You are put down as one of the best three restaurateurs, together with Perry's and the Robespierre."

"But say, Mr. Rutchers, two thousand five hundred—" began Weinie, trying to look angry at the extortion. He was rich now; he was even one of the sights of New York.

"Three thousand! That's what your haggling has done," cut in H. R., with the cold determination that made him so formidable.

"All right!" And Caspar ran out of the room. A terrible man, this. But Frau Weinpuslacher would be in society now.

"I trust you will not be misled by *newspaper scientists* into fool dietetics," wrote McAppen Dix, M.D., the hygiene expert of an afternoon paper.

H. R. promptly stopped reading the letters and told one of his stenographers, "Reply to all telephone inquiries that the personnel of the commission has not yet been definitely decided upon."

The three highest-salaried chefs in New York, their emoluments duly quadrupled by the reporters after eating sample ideal luncheons, the three best restaurateurs, and the three leading experts on stomachic functions had their names printed as "Probable Public Menu Commission" by the afternoon prints.

Doubtless in order not to be accused of plagiarism each afternoon paper published a different set of names. Tentative menus also were given, to be repudiated by H. R. and by indignant competitors in the next morning's papers.

[Pg 200]

That is how, in its glorious march to charity, all New York began to take an interest in menus. It was the first symptom of an awakened civic conscience and intelligent humanitarianism. "Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are," long ago observed Brillat-Savarin. H. R. wrote it for the reporters. It furnished the text for learned editorial sermons.

When Andrew Barrett ventured to express his admiration, H. R. murmured:

"Plausible, persistent, and picturesque."

"I don't quite get you," said Barrett.

"Watch me and learn," retorted H. R.

Other men have disregarded persistence, but H. R. did not. He kept up the firing; no broadside, but one big gun at a time—once a day. As a result, the H. R. plan for feeding the hungry of New York assumed a serious aspect. The right bill of fare would change potential Socialists into sensible citizens. This was so obviously true that everybody said no living man could do it. But everybody anxiously looked for the publication of the Public Menu Commission's report. It thus became news plus suspense.

The moment H. R. had selected the personnel of the commission he went to the Goodchild house.

"Frederick, tell Miss Goodchild to come down at once. I have only a minute to stay. Make haste!"

The imperturbable English menial actually ran.

Grace rushed down in alarm. Frederick's incoherent words had made her fear it was a message from her dressmaker telling why it was absolutely impossible to have it ready in time as promised under oath.

[Pg 201]

She petrified herself when she beheld the man who had made her famous. She did this in order not to betray her glad relief.

"Oh!"

"Grace!" exclaimed H. R., fervently. He quickly approached her, took her hand and led her into her own drawing-room. He then waved his disengaged left at all the chairs with an air that said, "I give all this magnificence to you!" He waved again and commanded, "Sit down!"

She obeyed, but he did not let go her right hand. He sat beside her. Just as she was about to pull it away indignantly he patted it twice very kindly and himself laid it on her own lap.

Her anger was on the very brink of turning itself into oratory when he stood up, squarely before her, clenched his fists in order to hold himself in a vanadium-steel clutch, and whispered, huskily:

"Merciful Heaven, but you're beautiful!"

The vocal storm, checked for an instant by his extraordinary exhibition of self-control, gave him time to go on: "Don't look at me! Don't you know how beautiful you are? It isn't fair!"

He turned from her, walked over to one of the windows, and stared out of it.

It showed more than self-control. It showed respect. And there are times when a New York girl likes to feel that the man who wishes to marry her also respects her. Grace knew it would be absurd to ring for a policeman; as absurd as to encourage H. R. to stay. And she really had not studied him cold-bloodedly. She looked at his back and wondered.

Presently H. R. turned from the window and with a semblance of composure said to her:

[Pg 202]

"If you will scold me, or laugh at me, or turn your back on me, I'll find it easier to speak calmly."

Since such was the case, she decided not to do any of the things he desired her to do. She also said nothing. It is a very wise woman who, being beautiful, can keep her mouth shut.

"Grace, you and I are now at the door of the church. Our wedding will be positively a national event. Have you read the papers? Did you see what I have undertaken to do for your sake?"

She turned away her head. But she heard him say, with the calmness of a man who is sure of himself, and therefore to be respected:

"I am cool again. You may turn your head this way."

Her foot was tap-tapping the polar-bear skin eighty-four times to the minute. She was trying to find a way of getting rid of him once for all. She did not desire more sensational newspaper articles, and she realized that she must be more than careful if she was not to supply the material for them. She was clever enough to realize that this was not a man to be shooed away, chickenwise. What had seemed so easy to do was in truth an appalling problem.

"Listen, Grace. For your sake I gave to New York free sandwiches."

She sniffed before she could help it.

"You are right," he admitted, "even if it made you famous"—she was unmoved—"and me rich!"

She started slightly. She had never thought of the business end of his crusade. The motive is everything, in love as in murder.

"You are right," he pursued. "But, really, I am not bragging about it. But now I'm going to give free dinners. Millions are affected— I mean millions of dollars, not people. But I must have your help. Even your da—

[Pg 203]

"Sir!" began the loyal daughter, angrily.

"*Dad*, I was going to say, not *damn*, as you naturally assumed," he explained, with dignity. "Even dad is on the Mammoth Hunger Feast Commission. I put him on. When he sees I got the other bank presidents he'll stay on. But I'll tell you why I came to see you—"

"Uninvited," she frowned.

"Of course. I haven't asked for the latch-key. By the way, is this house big enough for the wedding reception?" he pondered, anxiously.

"It is—for mine," she said, pointedly. Then she wondered why she didn't order him away. The reason was that she couldn't. He wasn't that kind of man!

"That's good," he exclaimed with relief. "Well, I want you to sell tickets. You read about the tickets for the Mammoth Hunger Feast?"

"No! And I don't wish to know anything about it."

"Quite so," he said, approvingly. "That being the case, you know all about it. The tickets are to be sold by the one hundred perfectly beautiful girls in New York. You head the list."

She turned her face to him, a sneer on her lips. But before she could speak he said, apologetically:

"I know it isn't a subtle compliment. It happens to be a fact. There is going to be tremendous pressure brought to bear on me for places on the corps. I tell you this because your best friends will drive you crazy asking you to use your influence with me. People who decry favoritism always expect favors. I'd do anything for you. But I can't have any but perfectly beautiful ones. I simply can't!"

[Pg 204]

She looked at him with irrepressible interest. Then, remembering her position, said, coldly, "Will you please leave now and never come back?"

He went on: "It is going to make enemies for you. That will be your first payment for being famous. You will be Number One of the perfectly beautiful hundred because God made you what you are and not because you are my wife—"

"I am not!"

"—to be. You didn't let me finish. Tell your friends you can't. If they pester you, tell 'em flatly you won't. And for Heaven's sake don't use the photograph of your pearls any more, nor the Crane portrait. Use the picture *Vogue* had last week. Or get some fresh ones and give La Touche an order to supply 'em to the reporters. They won't cost you a cent that way, because they print his name. Good-by, Grace."

He held out his hand. She quickly put hers behind her back. His face thereat lighted up.

"Ah, you love me!" he exclaimed. "It was only a question of time, Empress. And you will never know how much I love you until you realize what it costs me to go away from here, un-kissing, un-kissed, and yet without regrets! But some day—" He paused, and then, with a fierce hunger that made his voice thick, "Some day I'll *eat* you!"

He walked out. She made an instinctive movement toward him, but checked herself. As he left the room she confronted the mirror and looked at herself.

It brought the usual mood of kindness.

She forgave him.

[Pg 205]

She rang for Frederick. "The Menaud motor, at once!" and went up-stairs to telephone. If the reporters had to use photographs, she couldn't stop them.

Ten minutes later she had kindly given La Touche the photographer eighteen poses.

La Touche thanked her with the perfervid sincerity of a man whose irreducible minimum is forty-eight dollars a dozen. Then he asked, anxiously:

"In case the reporters—"

"I suppose they'd get them, anyhow." She spoke cynically.

"Not unless they stole 'em," he denied, dignifiedly. "We never give any out without permission. Of course they'd use snapshots, which are not always—er—artistic."

Remembering that she had been snapped when she had a veil on and also with her mouth open,

as all mouths must be in active speech, she told him in a bored tone:

"It doesn't interest me."

"Thank you, mademoiselle! Thank you!" effusively exclaimed the artist. "It is no wonder—"

She turned on him a cold, haughty stare.

He was all confusion.

"*Pardon!* I—I— Monsieur Rutgers—" he stammered. "I—I— He—"

She left the shop, a vindictive look in her wonderful eyes. She hated H. R. Was she merely the advertised vulgarity of that unspeakable man whom her family so foolishly had not jailed? What had he made of her? She might not mind being called beautiful by the newspapers, but—

The photographer's liveried flunky on the sidewalk opened the door of her motor. [Pg 206]

Nine pedestrians, two of them male, stopped.

"That's Grace Goodchild!" hissed one of the women, tensely.

"See her?" loudly asked another.

In the time consumed between the opening of the car's door and her taking her seat eleven more New-Yorkers gathered about the Menaud.

"Home!" she snapped, angrily.

The photographer's flunky stepped away to tell the chauffeur. Instantly a young man's head was thrust through the window of the car. Behind him crowded a dozen disgusting beasts—female.

"You're a pippin!" came from the young man's face a foot from her own. She shrank back. "Say, *he's* right! I wisht I was in his—" Then the motor started and nearly, but, alas! not quite, decapitated the loathsome compatriot.

If this was fame, she didn't wish any of it, she decided.

"I hate him!" she said to the cut-glass flower-holder. "He has given me this absurd notoriety and — What delays us?"

She looked out of the window.

They were halted at Thirty-fourth Street. Presently the traffic policeman's whistle blew. The motor started again.

She looked at the policeman. He instantly touched his helmet to her. And she saw also that he nodded eagerly to his mounted colleague across the street.

The man on horseback also saluted her militarily!

She bowed to him. She had to, being well-bred. She also smiled. She was of the logical sex.

"Nevertheless, I hate—" But she left her thought unfinished in her quick desire to lie to herself. [Pg 207]

"The policeman must know papa," she said, aloud, to show H. R. what she thought of him.

And that made her wonder what H. R. had up his sleeve now. What did he mean by saying that her troubles were only beginning and that she soon would feel the heavy price of fame? What absurd thing was that about the perfectly beautiful hundred and the tickets and the Beauty Commission and the free sandwiches—hateful word!—and the free dinners, and the—

She almost ran up to her room, pretending not to hear the voices of her tea-drinking friends in the Dutch room. In her boudoir she quickly read all the newspaper clippings. She learned all about the Mammoth Hunger Feast because, this being the second time, she now read intelligently, instead of looking for a certain name.

If H. R. could do all he said he would, he would be a wonder. And he was a very clever chap, anyhow.

Her father must be wrong.

Mr. Goodchild himself could never get the newspapers to say about him all the nice things they said about H. R. And Bishop Phillipson and the fathers of girls she knew, and people she had heard of and painters and novelists and—er—people were helping H. R.

The tickets and the ten-thousand-dollar coupons and the ideal menu!

"He *is* clever!" she admitted, and smiled. Then she decided, "If he makes me ridiculous—" and frowned. "I could kill him!" she said, calmly, as befits a Christian assassin. That desire compelled her to think of H. R. and of what he had said from their first meeting at the bank. He had said much and had done more. In the end she spoke aloud: "I wonder if he really loves me?" [Pg 208]

A knock at the door was the only answer—a servant who came to tell her that Mrs. Goodchild wished her to know they were waiting for her downstairs in the Dutch room.

"Very well," she said to the servant. To herself she said, firmly, "Even if he loves me and is everything he should be I can never marry a man who has made me feel like a theatrical poster!"

Her determination was adamant. To break it H. R. must be more than clever.

[Pg 209]

XIX

H. R. at that very moment was in his office. He had prepared a few model epistles for his Public Sentiment Corps to write to the newspapers, asking whether the composition of the ideal hunger-appeaser had been printed and when the tickets for the Mammoth Hunger Feast would be offered for sale. This would keep alive interest in his plans and in the personnel of his public commissions. People had grown to believe that all sorts of commissions were necessary not only to free but even to intelligent government.

He had his list of names ready for the reporters when they called.

"The announcement as to how we shall sell the tickets—each at twenty-five cents—to pay for a wonderful meal for a hungry person and a coupon attached, with ten thousand dollars in cash if you have brains—will be made to-morrow."

"But—" expostulated a fat reporter.

"To-morrow!" said H. R., feeling strong enough now to be nasty to the press. Either he was or he was not yet News. He would decide that matter for all time.

"Do you think we are your hired press agents to—" angrily began the fat one.

"I don't give a damn if I never see you again. I don't care what you print or what you don't print, nor when. We do our advertising through the medium of sandwiches. Get to hell out of here and remember the libel laws; also that I pay my lawyers by the year. They are not very busy just now." To the others he said, kindly, "That's all to-day, boys. I'm busy as blazes."

[Pg 210]

Cursing the absurd libel laws which prevent all newspapers from printing the truth, the fat reporter took his list of names and his leave at one and the same time. You can't treat even frauds humorously nowadays.

H. R. had won again!

He summoned Andrew Barrett and said to him: "Get this sandwich out to-morrow. It is one of our own. S. A. S. A. account; all-day job."

"The men objected to the other—"

"Seven thirty-cent tickets to Weinpuslacher's apiece," interrupted H. R., impatiently. "Get them from Weinie. He owes us three thousand."

"Great! Greatissimo!" shouted young Mr. Barrett. He hated to pay out real money, and the members were getting ugly. They wanted pay for everything, even for sandwiching for the Cause.

"Go to the costumer of the Metropolitan Opera House, to Madame Pauline, and to Monsieur Raquin of the Rue de la Paix who is stopping at the Hôtel Regina, and to the fashion editor of the *Ladies' Home Mentor*, and ask each to send us a design for a ticket-seller's costume. They will be worn by perfectly beautiful girls. There will be one hundred of them. I myself vote for the Perfect Thirty-eight, about five feet seven and one-half tall. My model of perfection is Miss Goodchild. Get busy. And, Barrett—"

"Yes, sir."

[Pg 211]

"Here is the text for the sandwich." H. R. handed a sheet of paper to his lieutenant, who read thereon:

ONE HUNDRED GIRLS

WILL SELL TICKETS

TO THE

MAMMOTH HUNGER FEAST

THEY ARE THE ONLY

PERFECTLY BEAUTIFUL GIRLS

IN ALL NEW YORK

LOOK FOR THEM!

LOOK AT THEM!

PERFECTLY BEAUTIFUL!

O. K.
H. R.,
Sec.

"Say, H. R., this is the master-stroke! commented Andrew Barrett.

"To-morrow," said H. R. coldly, "one hundred sandwiches on the Avenue. One of them in front of Goodchild's all day. White canvas. Heliotrope letters. Pea-green border. Design number eleven. Also insert this ad. in all the papers."

This was the copy of the advertisement:

Wanted: Perfectly Beautiful Girls. Not merely pretty, nor merely young, nor merely hopeful, but Perfectly Beautiful! Object: To make New-Yorkers thank Providence they live in the same town. Apply H. R., Allied Arts Bldg.

Andrew Barrett read it and left the room shaking his head, unable to speak coherently.

[Pg 212]

H. R. looked up a few addresses in the Directory and went out. He called on the president of the National Academy of Design, on the Professor of Anatomy of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, on the president of the National Sculpture Society, the president of the Magazine Cover Designers' Guild, the president of the Equal Suffrage League, who was Mrs. Vandergilt, and Professor Tangolino, late of the Argentine Republic. These, with H. R., would constitute the Public Beauty Commission and would decide who was perfectly beautiful.

To each he pointed out that the noble cause of charity must be advanced. Also an American standard of perfect beauty would be established for all time, their decision being unappealable. The artists instantly approved the plan, the method being artistic and therefore strictly logical. The president of the Suffrage League at first demurred. She objected to sex being dragged into the affair, and, besides, mere physical beauty too long had been accorded a disproportionate importance in social and political matters. It degraded a sex fit for higher things than to be man's plaything. H. R., however, earnestly pointed out that it involved the recognition of the superior salesmanship of women—not sales*womanship*, but sales*manship*, for while man was no better than woman in the conduct of the government or anything else, woman was infinitely the superior of man in many things. He finally induced Mrs. Vandergilt and the others to serve on the commission.

But the damned newspapers, he warned them, would print names and would, alas! devote much space to their deliberations.

They said that the regrettable publicity would not stop them from doing their duty.

[Pg 213]

He returned to his office and prepared a series of questions for the papers to ask him. This is the most intelligent form of newspaper interview because it is always printed. Answers to the reporters' own questions always appear in the papers when the reporters themselves have to supply them.

These were the questions—which later on the Public Sentiment Corps answered with judiciously varied ayes and noes.

1. Were there one hundred Perfectly Beautiful Girls in New York?
2. Would there be a second Judgment of Paris?
3. Was the Public Beauty Commission really competent?
4. How many points for complexion and coloring? For teeth? For figure? For hands and feet and hair?
5. Would not a uniform garment, on the lines of Annette Kellerman's bathing-suit, be the only fair way?
6. Would the wives, daughters, or fiancées of the members of the commission be *hors concours*?
7. At what age did a girl cease to be a *Girl*?
8. Should Morality be allowed to interfere with Art?

When the reporters called at the S. A. S. A. offices H. R. gave to each a typewritten set of the questions and said:

"The commission will hold meetings. They will be public to the applicants. Nobody else, excepting male reporters, will be allowed to be present. And you might add, gentlemen, that the

commission considers the requirements for success so uncommon as to render unnecessary the lease of the Madison Square Garden to hold the candidates. The sessions will be held in a room not much larger than this room. And," added the diabolic H. R., "we have no fear of overcrowding. They have to be *perfectly beautiful girls*, beautifully perfect. Now, don't quote me, boys, but you might print, as a report on good authority, that the only one thus far chosen is Miss Grace Goodchild!"

[Pg 214]

Though all reporters are human, most of them are grateful. They duly published the "rumor" and Grace's latest photographs.

[Pg 215]

XX

Long before the tea was over, Grace Goodchild, two miles north of him, realized that H. R. was one of those detestable persons who are always right. A dozen of her intimates surrounded her in the Dutch room. They all talked at once. When eleven stopped for lack of breath the twelfth, who very cleverly had saved hers, asked:

"Did they really pick you out, Grace?"

The speaker was not perfectly beautiful. But she was wise and therefore a virgin.

"No!" said Grace. "But really, I don't want to have anything to do with it."

"If Hendrik was *my* Hendrik, I'd be *It*," said the wise virgin, determinedly, "or he'd know it!"

"He told me," Grace spoke modestly, "that only perfectly beautiful girls would be chosen. And so of course that lets me out!"

"Oh-h-h-h!" came in chorus. There ensued much whispering. Grace flushed. No woman likes to be accused of mendacity monosyllabically. It made her dislike H. R. more than ever.

"Does your father," asked the wise one, "still oppose—"

"He does," answered Grace. Then she added, "Of course."

"I think your father—" And the wise one bit her lips. You would have thought she was snipping off thread with her teeth. A well-bred person must do this oftener than a seamstress—to keep herself from telling the truth.

[Pg 216]

"My father," tactfully observed Marion Molyneux, "could oppose until the cows came home."

"Mamma is on the commission and I'm not eligible, so *I* am not after his vote," said Ethel Vandergilt. "But I'd love to meet him, Grace. Is he all they say he is?"

Grace Goodchild for the first time began to realize that H. R. was a remarkable man. She realized it by the simple expedient of disliking Ethel.

"Is it true that he'll do anything you tell him?" cut in Cynthia Coleman, enviously. She was a very pretty girl, with the absurd doll face that makes men feel so manly. She had brains. A girl with that face always has. She shows it by never showing them. The face does the trick more quickly.

Grace said, calmly, "H. R. never—"

"Oh, girls, she calls him H. R., too!" exclaimed Marion.

Feeling herself one of a multitude made Grace feel a mere human being. Created in the image of God, each of them naturally desires to feel like a goddess.

"I do not call him H. R.," said Grace, coldly.

"It is more important to know what he calls her," observed the wise one.

Grace remembered what H. R. had called her. She felt herself blushing with anger. Truly, the gods were kind to H. R.

"Coming back to our muttons, are you going to introduce us?" asked Ethel Vandergilt.

[Pg 217]

"I'm not going to have anything to do with the affair," said Grace, decisively.

"Aren't you?" said the wise one. It barely missed being a sneer.

"Why not?" asked Ethel. She was the best-gowned woman in the United States. And she was *ex-officio hors concours*.

Grace Goodchild felt the stare of twenty pairs of eyes of differing degrees of brightness, but of the same degree of unbelief. They irritated her by flattering her. No woman can concentrate when watched by other women. Grace, therefore, was compelled to live up to the rôle which society had assigned to her, whether she liked it or not.

When you tell a man he is wise and ask for advice, he looks as wise as he can and answers ambiguously. When you tell a woman you don't believe her she indignantly tells you the truth.

"One of the reasons"—she spoke very sweetly—"is that he said my friends would ask me to do it but he did not wish me to add to his troubles."

The girls were listening with their very souls, for this was inside news.

Grace went on: "The commission will be absolutely impartial—"

"You don't know mother!" muttered Ethel Vandergilt.

Grace heard her, and she said, rebukingly, "Yes, absolutely impartial and—"

"Are you chosen one of the hundred?" asked the wise virgin.

"Yes, I am!" answered Grace, defiantly. "I had nothing to do with it. This whole affair is exceedingly distasteful to me."

[Pg 218]

"Of course!" came in a great chorus.

To agree with her in that tone of voice was intolerable.

Grace's hatred shifted from the unspeakable H. R. to these bosom friends. If it were not that H. R. was always right, she wouldn't dislike *him* so much.

"It is not that I mind not being one of the hundred, but the not being asked to be," muttered the doll face.

It was obviously what all of them minded.

Ethel Vandergilt said: "If I could make my mother resign I'd offer my services. But she is not the resigning kind. Good-by. I'm crazy to meet your H. R."

Well, they were welcome to him—if she made up her mind she did not want him for herself.

The moment the last false friend left, Grace's tolerant smile vanished.

Was she, in sooth, chosen Number One? The papers said it was only a rumor.

Suppose she was not Number One, after all? Supposing the commission—

"I could kill him!" she hissed, and left the room.

Frederick came to her. "Miss Goodchild, there are five reporters waiting to see you."

"Say I'm not at home!" Then she called the man back. "Ask them what they want," and went upstairs to her room.

Frederick returned presently and reported: "They say they will do themselves the honor to inform you in person if you will be kind enough to see them. And, Miss—" He paused. He had exceeded his duty.

"What is it, Frederick?" asked Grace, knowing that the imperturbable cockney was perturbed.

"There is quite a crowd outside. They are photographing the ladies, ma'am."

[Pg 219]

"What ladies?"

"Begging your pardon, Miss Vandergilt and the others, ma'am."

"Where?"

"Just in front of the door. Mr. Goodchild had some trouble in getting in, ma'am. He's quite vexed about it, but it wasn't my fault, ma'am," he said, forgetting that he was a menial; that is, protesting against injustice. "I couldn't help it, ma'am."

"Very well, Frederick," she said, graciously, and descended.

Five reporters were politely listening to Mr. Goodchild's vituperations. Therefore his daughter walked down the stairs as majesty descends from the dais. One of the reporters started to meet her half-way.

"Hey! confound you, come down!" shrieked papa.

"Miss Goodchild, we wished to ask you if you had been chosen as the first of the perfectly beautiful hundred. Now that we have seen you at close range, the question is unnecessary."

She smiled slightly; then ceased to smile. The intelligent young man proceeded courteously: "Will you therefore kindly tell us when the wedding will be?"

All reporters are psychologists in their interrogations. The other reporters ceased listening to Mr. Goodchild and as politely as the circumstances permitted took out paper and pencils.

When an angry man is suddenly deprived of his audience he becomes a mental assassin.

Mr. Goodchild blamed it on H. R.

"She'll never marry that infernal idiot!" he shrieked. He was the head of the house.

"Ah yes," said the diplomatist on the stair, looking as though he had memorized the exact words.

"Ah yes! June! Thank you." He nodded gratefully at Mr. Goodchild, jotted down a date, and put the paper in his pocket. [Pg 220]

"Congratulations, Miss Goodchild," he said to her, with profound respect, and descended. In the hall he said to his colleagues: "Come on, boys. We've got the month. She *is* Number One, and—"

"If you dare to print anything I'll have you fired," fumed Mr. Goodchild.

"If you were a younger man I'd tell you to fire your grandmother, sir. But I fear me she is, alas! no more. In the mean time, Mr. Goodchild, will you be good enough to pose for our artist? Look pleasant, please. You'll have to close your mouth to do it. Wilson, you may begin filming when ready!" he said to his photographer, who had just pushed past Frederick.

Sounds of cheering and applause came from the street. The ultra-fashionable friends of Grace Goodchild, having been photographed, were shaking hands with the artists and spelling their own names to the reporters.

The gaping proletariat, seeing such graciousness, recognized the aristocracy of the democracy and were cheering madly. An aristocracy whose sense of humor makes it kindly is lasting.

"Them's real swells!" shrieked a red-headed girl who carried a large bandbox.

More cheers.

At that moment Grace Goodchild, impelled by an irresistible curiosity appeared at her door.

"*There she is!* Hooray!" proudly shrieked two hundred and eighteen potential Socialists, making room for Bishop Phillipson.

Hoping they were not too late for the wedding, the throngs clapped furiously. Even at marriages there are encore fiends. [Pg 221]

"How do you do, my child?" inquired the Bishop, with a tolerant smile.

"Please turn around, Bishop!" shrieked the *Journal* artist. He was paid by the portrait.

The Bishop did so, smiled benignantly, saw the shutter open and close, and then said, deprecatingly:

"I do not wish my picture taken, sir."

"No, sir. Will you give us another shot, Bishop?"

The reverend gentleman waited a moment and then shook his head and turned his back rebukingly on the photographers, who a second time had not respected his wishes.

"Such is fame, Bishop Phillipson," Grace told him, with a smile.

"Reflected greatness, rather," said the Bishop, with his courtly kindness.

"It's an infernal outrage!" came in a husky voice from the house.

"It's papa. He doesn't understand—"

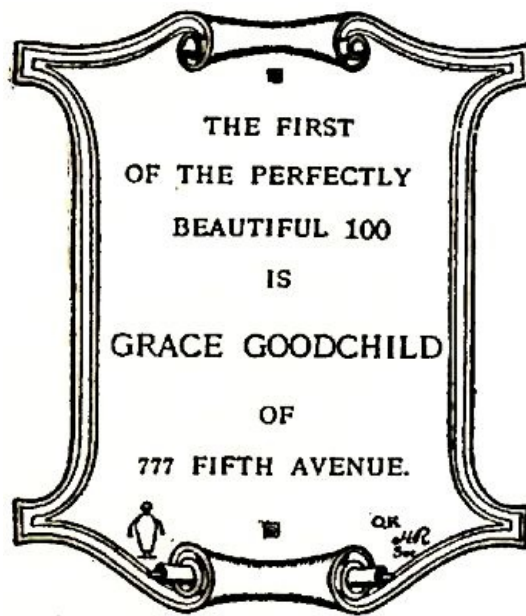
"He and I are too old, I fear," smiled the Bishop, mournfully. "And how is H. R., my dear?"

She shook her head and frowned. Always that person!

"A most remarkable young man," pursued the Bishop, congratulatorily. He had received three and one-half bushels of letters from utter strangers, commending his practical Christianity and his highly intelligent plan for feeding the hungry. Five vestry-men also had expressed their gratification that his name headed the list of the men who had made New York the greatest city of the hemisphere. It looked as though the hungry were to be fed. [Pg 222]

The Bishop and Grace moved out of the doorway to allow the reporters to pass, and were themselves about to enter the house when a sound of cheering made them halt in their tracks.

A vast crowd was walking up the Avenue. In the van marched one of H. R.'s free sandwiches. He was dressed in crimson broadcloth (from Morton & Co. as per the next morning's accounts) and he wore a shining silk hat (Fox Brothers, as per same in the *Times*, *Herald*, and *Tribune*). The sandwich-board was a most gorgeous affair—a shield of burnished gold (by Cellini & Co., Florentine frame-makers) on which were the arms of the City of New York in heraldic colors. Beneath, in six-inch letters of glittering turquoise enamel, was:



In front of the Goodchild mansion the stalwart free sandwich stopped, faced Miss Goodchild, raised his glittering top-hat, and held it in the air, Beau Brummelesquely.

[Pg 223]

Andrew Barrett was immediately behind the herald of the free and intelligent people of the greatest city of the New World.

A hush fell on the multitude.

"Speech!" shrieked Andrew Barrett.

"Speech!" shrieked twelve hundred and thirty-eight intelligent New-Yorkers and seven bankers.

"There's Bishop Phillipson!" shrilled a correctly gowned elderly lady, pointing a jeweled lorgnette at the Bishop of New York. It meant the Church approved.

"Hooray for the Bishop! Bishop! Bishop!"

"*Vox populi, vox Dei*," murmured the Bishop to himself.

"Say something, my child," he gently urged Grace. "After all, we may dislike the way it is done, but if the hungry are fed we may be forgiven."

Grace Goodchild burned with desire to make a wonderful speech to prove that her greatness was her very own. They wanted her, not H. R., this time! It was *her* triumph, not his.

Alas! She did not know what to say. She did not even know how to say it. She therefore shook her head angrily.

"Speech!" shouted the crowd, twice as vehemently as before. They always want to hear what you don't wish to say.

The cameras were clicking away madly. They sounded like the telegraph-room of a national convention.

Five-dozen healthy young persons began chanting, rhythmically:

"Speech! Speech! Speech!—speech!—speech!"

Grace thought they were saying:

"His Peach! His Peach! His Peach! Peach! Peach!"

She hotly resented the intimation of H. R.'s ownership, but the sincerity of the tribute paralyzed her. The sandwich-man had been amiably told by Andrew Barrett, "Hold the pose, you slob!" and did so. His immobility was most impressive. His shield dazzled Grace. She recalled, in a flash, Geraldine Farrar.

She bowed to the sandwich, then to right and left, kissed her hand to the crowd of voters and not-yet voters, and ran blushing into the house.

The storm of applause broke loose. The very house rocked drunkenly as the sound-waves dashed themselves against the façade.

The strenuous, nerve-racking life of New York compelled the crowd to linger for an hour. It was not until they began to break off bits of the bronze railing and chip souvenirs from the portico columns that the Goodchilds' butler sent a hurry call for the police.

The lieutenant's official version was cold and formal.

[Pg 225]

XXI

The Public Menu Commission had been having pitched battles. The Public Sentiment Corps had been bombarding the newspapers with letters asking for the official menu, but the commission refused to be hurried by popular clamor, and said so to the reporters. Their own sessions were held behind locked doors. Omelette soufflée au curaçoa was definitely stricken off Signor Piccolini's tentative menu, on the theory that the filling was not permanent.

"Air is cheap," protested Piccolini, "and we have to consider the expense."

"But we want something that will stay by the hungry more than fifteen minutes."

"Then," said Piccolini, scathingly, "give them sliced rubber boots."

"If *you* prepared the sauce, dear master," interjected H. R., who happened to be present, "I'd rather eat it than any other artist's filet Châteaubriand aux—"

Piccolini bowed to him profoundly. Then he shrugged his shoulders at the others.

"Nevertheless," he said, with conviction, "Omelette soufflée—"

"What can you expect from the other members?" whispered H. R. to him. "If we prolong the debate there won't be any hungry men alive to eat our dinner. Yield, dear master, for the sake of humanity." Then he said aloud, "Let's try beans." [Pg 226]

The Commission therefore reported progress and adjourned for the day.

The newspapers, spurred thereto by the avalanche of letters and favorite recipes from charitable ladies in Brooklyn, who gave their names, addresses, and terms per week, devoted much space to the ideal hunger-appeaser.

For the first time in history New York began to take an intelligent interest in menus. Everybody talked about eating as if Hungarian orchestras and Brazilian dances did not exist.

Presently the newspapers announced on unimpeachable authority that serious dissensions existed among the members of the Public Menu Commission. It was hinted that resignations would be called for.

Applications for the vacant places and suggestions from really competent men poured into the editorial rooms. It made the commission, as usual, an editorial target. More space!

That impelled the Commission, speaking with difficulty by reason of the swollen lips of the chairman, to announce the menu. H. R. had it printed on academy board.

New York, on the tiptoe of expectation to learn what an ideal hunger-appeaser would consist of, and how it could be done for twenty-five cents and how the commission could decide without bloodshed, made haste to read the menu:

Soup à la Piccolini
Entrée à la Hôtel Regina
Roast à la Perry
Vegetable à la Weinpusslacher
Dessert à la Fitz-Marlton
Bread à la Prof. Preston
Milk à la Pasteur
Coffee à la Manhattan
Tea as Wanted

[Pg 227]

O. K.
H. R.,
Sec.

The exact recipe of each dish would be made public after the Hunger Feast. It would remain a secret until then!

More space! See? Could the newspapers help it? Didn't people have to have something to talk about? If they didn't, what could the editorial writers have to write about?

Knowing that talk must continue in order that interest in the Hunger Feast might not abate, H. R. himself went to the shops on Fifth Avenue. The shops elsewhere would follow the Avenue fashions.

He told each window-dresser the same thing.

"I come to you *first* because you are an artist concerned with color effects and striking arrangements. You also are a psychologist, since you compel people to halt on the sidewalk and then mutely induce them to use the doors. You really are the man who declares the dividends on the firm's capital stock. Yes, you do, and I'll see that the big chief acknowledges it, too. Now I've come to you—*first!* Whatever you do will be copied. It makes you plagiarizable, and that is merely the recognition of greatness. You have the window. In order to dissociate the idea of money from your shop in the public's mind I'm going to give you a chance to prove that you are above mere

money-making, which is something no Fifth Avenue shop ever did before. Remember in this connection the psychology of the crowd and of the money they wish to spend and at the same time keep in their pockets. You and your windows are New York—the New York that draws the crowd of natives and Americans. Give a whole window, not to *my* charity, but to New York's—to yours! Put this menu on an easel, with a background of that wonderful velvet you had the other day—the one that killed your competitors. It was wonderful!"

Before the artist could draw his breath H. R. had warmly bid him good-by, leaving a menu in the astonished artist's hand.

They did. It was original, as they explained to the boss. And even department-store bosses know that originality means novelty, and novelty is what New York pays for.

Within six hours the first edition of menus was exhausted. In every shop window in New York the public could read the Public Menu Commission's masterpiece. Cost: \$68.14 + H. R.

The undoubted possessors of perfect beauty gave more trouble than the menu, and therefore got more space in the newspapers. A regular detail of police guarded not only the Allied Arts Building day and night, but also the honor and features of the Public Beauty Commission. Grace Goodchild was compelled to make use of her neighbor's house, Mrs. Vantine's, in order to reach the street. She used the Seventy-sixth Street entrance. Mrs. Vantine congratulated Grace each time on her deserved triumph and asked her to look at Louise, her youngest.

H. R. had told Barrett to convey delicately to the press that the relatively young wife of one of the members of the commission had left for Reno. No name was mentioned. Therefore the portraits of all the male members were impartially published. A neat little interrogation-mark after each name did *not* constitute libel.

The commissioners were thereafter compelled to be particularly nice to their own wives in public.

The theatrical profession howled individually, collectively, in person, in writing, by telephone, and through press agents. Nightly these favorites would ask, more or less nasally and slightly below pitch, whether they were not perfectly beautiful, and gave the audience the opportunity to judge of fifteen-sixteenths of their persons. And the unanimous reply was, "You are!"—from the claue. It became the topic of the day, and as such divided families and parted friends.

At the end of three days H. R. diabolically announced that only sixty-eight had been selected.

"Aren't there one hundred perfectly beautiful girls in Greater New York?" he feverishly asked the reporters. "Aren't there?"

The literary misogynists propounded the same query—in the head-lines, at that! On the very morning that saw that insulting question printed it was estimated by one of the newspapers that 318,029 answered, "Present." It was probably an exaggeration, as there doubtless was some repeating.

The Public Beauty Commission added fourteen to the list of utter pulchritudes. Names, addresses, and portraits duly printed.

Elderly persons signing William H. P. or James G. C. in feminine hand-writing asked the most conservative newspapers whether there was nothing else fit to print but the disgusting travesty on charity or the appalling vulgarity of immodest females.

The newspapers printed the letters. One of them, an afternoon sheet, stopped printing names and portraits of the successful. It stopped for one issue.

The circulation department interviewed the city department. The paper went back, under a new city editor, to the business of printing all the news that was fit to print.

The public demanded it.

On Sunday all the newspapers published the full list of one hundred perfectly beautiful girls who alone would sell tickets admitting the holder to the Mammoth Hunger Feast in the capacity of spectator. One to each customer; no more.

On Monday they printed a facsimile of H. R.'s ticket.

	1	2	3	
--	---	---	---	--

No. 1 was a coupon to be detached by the seller. It was in the nature of both wages and a vote to show which was the perfectest of the perfect. It would mean the only fair election ever held in America. Only one ticket to each customer. There would be no rich man buying tickets by the thousand, no stuffing of the ballot-boxes by the gallant commander of a militia regiment, no undue influence on the part of high political officials. No man could resist a perfectly beautiful girl who asked him to buy one ticket for a quarter of a dollar, twenty-five cents.

No bribing by kisses was necessary.

The rest of the ticket was retained by the buyer. It bought what the masses were beginning to speak of as the dandy belly-filler for a hungry person who was warranted not to have any money.

No. 3 coupon was to be detached by the doorkeeper at Madison Square Garden and returned to the ticket-buyer. If the holder of said coupon exercised his or her brains he or she would receive ten thousand dollars in cash. Conditions governing the collection of said ten thousand dollars would be published on Saturday morning. It would *not* be a lottery.

It now behooved charitable New-Yorkers to buy the tickets which would feed all hungry persons who positively had no money to buy food with, and at the same time receive ten thousand dollars in cash, brains being present—all for twenty-five cents.

The ten thousand would be paid in cash, with United States Treasury notes obtained from the National Bank of the Avenue. This insured their genuineness.

On Monday the perfectly beautiful started. It was, fittingly, a perfectly beautiful day. In automobiles (makers' names given, since it was for charity) decked with beautiful flowers (donating florists also honorably mentioned in the public prints, and paid advs. besides) the perfectly beautiful hundred went forth to appeal to the great heart of New York.

They were indeed beautiful. At least the men, being blind and possessing the suffrage, thought so. Why, they even clamored to be allowed to buy. And found ways and means of repeating. They never can vote honorably.

The newspapers reported that by 11 P.M. 38,647 tickets had been sold. Also they announced twenty-three engagements of perfectly beautiful ticket-sellers.

[Pg 232]

Grace Goodchild's name led the list. This time Mr. Goodchild did not deny it. The reporters refused to listen to him, damn 'em!

On Tuesday the receipts fell on. Only 7,363 were sold.

No engagements.

On Wednesday the sales rose. The *offers* of marriage aggregated 18,889. Sixteen engagements of poor but perfectly beautiful girls to rich but devilishly wise old men!

A truly remarkable thing happened. Everybody ceased to be concerned with the sales of tickets or the object thereof. Crowds before the newspaper offices patiently watched for announcements of fresh betrothals. Every time one went on the bulletin-board the spectators cheered as if it were a home run instead of a prospective marriage.

The betrothed reported to H. R. that they found the display of the solitaires interfered with the sales of tickets. He advised them to remove it. They refused.

"Well," he said, coldly, "the one who sells the most tickets will be declared the most beautiful of the hundred. Of course you don't care what men think of your looks so long as one man thinks you are the most beautiful. He must, since he is your fiancé. By all means show the solitaire. I respect your modesty. Besides, it keeps you from receiving offers that you cannot, with honor, entertain."

They therefore removed their engagement-rings during business hours.

In Thursday's papers were printed the facsimile of a certified check for ten thousand dollars signed by H. R. It was a sample prize. All checks would be exchanged for cash before the Hunger Feast began.

[Pg 233]

Save your coupons!

This was already the commercial slogan of a great nation.

On Friday H. R., knowing that even perfectly beautiful girls cannot hold the attentive interest of New York unless infractions of the Seventh Commandment are provided in relays, gave out a statement for the newspapers. The newspapers not only printed it, but featured it.

Heretofore [said H. R.] when charitable folks have given money to organized charity they have never been able to feel certain that the money went to the right people. Organized charity has been compelled to be careful. While the merits of the case were under investigation it has frequently happened that the case has died of starvation. Now, genuine destitution needs not life-insurance examination, but common sense and ordinary Christianity on the jump. We have undertaken to feed the hungry who have no money to buy food with. If anybody out of the thousands who will be fed by us is proven to be an undeserving object of our charity I will give one hundred thousand dollars par value in gilt-edged securities to any organized charity approved by Mr. George G. Goodchild, president of the Ketcham National Bank, who, being my prospective father-in-law against his wishes, will be glad to have me lose the money.

Modern methods of efficiency have been applied to charity for the first time. Hence this meal, scientifically studied, artistically concocted, digestible, delicious, and filling. There will be no graft, no throwing away of the public's nobly given money, no dietetic fads, no scientific sawdust, no waste, no salaries, no fraudulent hangers, no inhumanity, no maudlin sentiment, nothing but common sense now first applied to charity by New York. The Mammoth Hunger Feast, marking an era in the life of the great metropolis, will begin at 8.30 P.M. in order to give time for

[Pg 234]

all ticket-holders to dine at home. Well-fed New-Yorkers will therefore be able to see with their own eyes how starving people eat—people who have no money to buy food with. Before each ticket-holder takes the seat to which he is entitled he, or more probably she, will receive ten thousand dollars in cash, by simply using brains. Let us see if New-Yorkers are as clever as they are charitable. Also, I shall marry Grace Goodchild in June.

[Signed] H. R.

A great many people announce an epoch-making idea and expect the world to remember it ever thereafter. H. R. knew that, living in a republic, he must iterate, reiterate, repeat, and sign every time.

On Saturday morning the ninety-nine other perfectly beautiful girls were engaged. Grace Goodchild, when asked point-blank if she were engaged to H. R., now answered, "Do you see any engagement-ring?" Then she held up her slim and beautiful hands. No ring.

All told, 186,898 tickets had been sold. It was plain that repeating had been indulged in. The fair sellers could not be blamed.

"If susceptible men have bought more than one ticket," H. R. said to the reporters, "they need not think they will get more than ten thousand dollars. But the fact remains that we have more than enough money."

This entitled H. R. to the respect of the most conservative dailies. And, moreover, he paid full rates for a half-page in which he printed this advertisement:

HUNGRY PEOPLE WHO CAN'T BUY FOOD BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO MONEY WILL RECEIVE A FINE DINNER FREE BY GOING TO MADISON SQUARE GARDEN TO-NIGHT BEFORE 8.30. FOURTH AVENUE ENTRANCE.

[Pg 235]

NO MATTER HOW YOU CAME TO BE HUNGRY AND PENNILESS; NO MATTER WHAT YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN OR WHAT YOUR RELIGION NOW IS; NO MATTER WHAT YOUR HABITS ARE OR WHAT YOUR POLITICAL OPINIONS MAY BE, WITHOUT REGARD TO YOUR JAIL RECORD, DISEASE, STATE OF MIND, OR FAVORITE NEWSPAPER, IF YOU ARE HUNGRY AND HAVE NO MONEY, COME AND EAT!

TO THE PUBLIC: COME AND SEE THEM EAT YOUR TICKETS!

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN SANDWICH ARTISTS.

H. R.,
Sec.

SPONSORS: THE MEN WHO HAVE MADE NEW YORK WHAT IT IS!

Then followed three hundred and seventeen famous names.

"What I have to say," H. R. modestly told the reporters, "I have stated in my advertisement. However, if you wish to ask any questions, or if you think the public is interested in any particular point—"

"It is! We do!" exclaimed the reporters. "Tell us about the ten thousand dollars!"

"It is very simple and very easy," said H. R., with the deadly earnestness of a man who knows he will not be believed when he speaks the truth in New York. "As each person passes the ticket-taker he will go, coupon in hand, into the superintendent's office. There he will be asked one question. It is not a catch question. No puns permitted. No double meaning. No particularly deep or recondite significance. It is a plain question, vital to the welfare of all New-Yorkers, affecting the destiny of the American nation. The answer is perfectly obvious. The Mayor has been invited to be present, and he will see to it that no fraud is perpetrated on the thousands of people who have bought tickets in good faith—"

[Pg 236]

"I thought the object of the tickets was to feed hungry—" began a serious-eyed reporter.

"It is; but charity carries a reward in cash. It is the modern way. You might add that there will be no reserved seats, no privileged classes. Where all men are alike charitable, all men are equal before God and man!"

Napoleon revolutionized the art of war by moving quickly and overwhelming the foe with artillery. H. R. made charity a success by appealing not alone to the charitable instinct of New-Yorkers, but to every other instinct he could think of. Therefore everybody who was not hungry logically decided to go to the Mammoth Hunger Feast. The newspapers printed long and reassuring accounts of the police arrangements.

H. R., being a republican at heart, had reserved the Imperial Box for Grace Goodchild and her friends, and ninety-nine Royal boxes for the other ticket-sellers and their fiancés. His free sandwich men occupied the front row of arena seats and had been coached by the leader of the Grand Opera clique. At a given signal they were to cheer Grace Goodchild. When the bugle announced H. R.'s entrance they were to go crazy.

Ten beers *after* the show.

[Pg 237]

At half after seven that night H. R., accompanied by eighteen contemporary historians and six magazine psychological portraitists, went to the entrance of the hungry. It was in the rear of the Garden and was dark and narrow.

Symbolism!

It was the same entrance that a few weeks previously had admitted the circus's beasts; only the beasts were not hungry.

Fourth Avenue seethed with humanity. A blind man afflicted with stone deafness could have told that hungry people were there provided his nose worked.

The street-cars had stopped running at 6.30 P.M., after the twenty-seventh accident.

The crowd was orderly and silent, as really hungry people are. And they had good manners, as the physically weak always have. And they were not impatient, for the prospect of eating always makes the starving hopeful.

A merciful darkness covered the hideousness of ten thousand faces. The reporters began to fidget like nervous women at a military play just before the execution.

H. R., seizing the exact psychological moment, said to the reporters:

"Let us press the button!"

[Pg 238]

It is the modern way—the press and the pressure.

He pressed the button. It turned on the lights of an electric sign hung above the entrance. The starving men read in blazing letters:

IF YOU ARE HUNGRY AND HAVE NO MONEY WALK IN!

By their light the reporters were able to see the faces of the crowd plainly.

"My God!" said the young man from the *Times*.

The dazzling invitation was so worded as to prevent unseemly haste and unnecessary crowding. It said, "*Walk* in."

"It is easy to assume, gentlemen," said H. R., calmly, to the reporters, "that all these people are hungry."

"Yes, let 'em all in!" entreated those reporters who were not jotting down impressions.

H. R. shook his head sternly.

"We have our duty to the public to perform. We must determine whether they have no money."

"Your duty is to feed them *all*," said the *Sun* man.

"You can't afford to make a single mistake. Did you see that white-haired woman—"

"Come with me, gentlemen," cut in H. R., leading the way within.

Streams of people began to flow in at each entrance, sedately; four big policemen, representing the majesty of the law, stood, two on either side of each entrance. The majesty was of locust wood, held in the air, ready to descend on the cranium of the lawless and even of the ill-mannered.

[Pg 239]

As the starving entered the door they found themselves in a passageway with sides of heavy plank that narrowed until they were walking in single file, just as they do in abattoirs and sheep-dipping pens.

One by one they thus came. There was a small inclosure on one side of the passage. There stood H. R. and his reporters. Beside them was a small table. A heap of shining silver quarters was on the table in plain sight of all.

H. R. asked the first man, "Are you hungry?"

"Yes. I haven't had a bite in—"

H. R. held up a hand to check the autobiography. He inquired, sternly:

"Got any money?"

"Nope."

"Sure?"

"Yep."

The reporters began to sneer. What did this H. R., who was said to be clever, expect such people to answer? That's the trouble with all wealthy philanthropists. They are damned fools. They don't know human nature nor their own compatriots.

"Do you want a quarter?" asked H. R., kindly, at the same time lifting a big handful of silver to show there was plenty.

"You bet!"

"Wouldn't you rather have a dollar?" asked H. R. He picked up four quarters and jingled them in his open palm by bouncing them up and down in the air, gently, invitingly.

The man stared at H. R. and refused to answer.

It must be a trap!

"Don't you or do you? Speak quickly!" said H. R., impatiently.

[Pg 240]

"Of course!"

"You'll have to let us search you to see how much you've got on you if you really want a dollar instead of the quarter."

"Say, yous—" began the man.

"Frisk him!"

"To hell with your dollar," said the man, defiantly clapping one hand to his pocket. "I knew it was a plant!"

"This way," politely said the plain-clothes men, leading away the pauper who didn't wish to be searched.

The colloquy had not been overheard by the other hungry guests. The man was led into a storeroom, where he was kept so that he might not empty his pockets and come in again from the street for the dollar he did not really want.

"You see how we will eliminate those who have money and—"

But the reporters were not listening to H. R. They were too busy writing. This man was no philanthropist. He was intelligent.

There were some guests who said they objected to the indignity of being searched, though they had no money. They joined the first man in the storeroom.

"No taxpayers' subterfuges tolerated," H. R. said.

But most of the hungry were perfectly willing to be searched and prove they had no money. They were told by H. R. to pass on. To those who asked for the money H. R. said, sternly:

"Do you wish to swallow a quarter or do you want to eat food?"

They grumbled. They were human. They passed on. They were hungry.

Having shown the reporters how the undoubted penury of the deserving hungry was established, H. R. led them into the presence of the Infallible Booze-detector.

[Pg 241]

"Yes, but when those poor people said they were willing to be searched and thereby prove they had no money, I notice you didn't give 'em the quarter," observed young Mr. Lubin of the *Onward*.

"We never promised to give money. We asked them if they wanted a quarter and then if they wouldn't prefer a dollar."

"Yes. But you cruelly raised their hopes," remonstrated Lubin. "These are human beings—"

"And we are going to fill their bellies," interrupted H. R. "Giving *money* to those who haven't any simply perpetuates Capitalism besides alienating the Christian vote. We *share* food. That's Socialism. We do not give alms. That's insulting. Besides, we do not own the quarters. They're borrowed."

Lubin was silenced.

That silence from the Socialist reporter was H. R.'s greatest triumph thus far.

As the penniless guests left the glittering heap of stage quarters unsearched they walked on along a gallery. At the end of it was another glittering electric sign. It said:

THIS WAY IF YOU ARE HUNGRY!

The hungry walked on eagerly. A few feet from the door that led into the arena where the waiting tables were they had to pass by a wide-open door. Within, in plain sight of the passers-by, was a long bar. Behind the bar were white-jacketed bartenders. The beer-kegs formed an inspiring background. On the bar itself stood dozens of big schooners—full.

[Pg 242]

Above the bar could be read:

FREE BEER! Frei! Gratis!

A few walked on—straight to the dining-hall.

But every one who walked into the free-beer room was told to go through a door on the left.

"That way!" a policeman told the thirsty.

The first man who went into the inner room found a policeman standing beside a table on which were a dozen full schooners.

"If you drink now you don't eat," courteously said the cop.

"Kismet!" said the starving man, and reached for a schooner.

"It's for *after* eating!" gently warned the policeman.

"Life is uncertain. I'll drink now and—"

"This way!" The policeman now spoke in his regular voice.

He led the thirsty out of the room by another door which led into still another room used for storing the heavy circus impedimenta.

"Do you see?" asked H. R., sweetly, to the reporters and the students of sociology from the magazines. "Do you?"

"Mr. Rutgers, Columbus and his egg had nothing on you," said the earnest young theorist from the *Evening Post*.

The others were busily turning out literature.

"It won't cheat 'em out of a meal," H. R. whispered to young Mr. Lubin from the *Onward*. "But they don't eat with the others." [Pg 243]

That is how H. R. kept his promise to the business men of New York. He had circumvented fraud, which is the chief aim of modern charity. Also he had discouraged the formation of a professional pauper class—the one danger against which all commonwealths must guard.

"I'd like to know what you are going to do with the culls," the *Sun* man asked H. R. He had of late been trying to elevate the tone of the magazines with real fiction; which they refused to print.

"Those who fell through thirst will be fed later," H. R. answered.

"And those that wouldn't be searched? They looked mighty hungry to me." He was an expert in hunger. It drove him out of Literature.

"We'll sell the left-over meals to them at cost. We are intelligent philanthropists. We shall now have a beer, gentlemen, and let us pass on."

That beer had taken on a subtle quality of exclusiveness. All the reporters drank with gusto. [Pg 244]

XXIII

At eight sharp the main entrance of the Garden was thrown open. The reporters promptly noted that the crowd of sight-seers exceeded the number of the hungry. It restored their belief in republican institutions.

As each ticket-holder presented his ticket he demanded the instant return of the ten-thousand-dollar coupon. Even the skeptics who knew they'd never get the ten thousand dollars did this.

The coupon-holder was then ushered into the superintendent's office, in which sat the Mayor of New York, the presidents of seven banks, the proprietors of six hotels, one United States Senator, H. R., and the reporters.

Behind them was a large frame inclosing stretched white oil-cloth. Printed thereon in large black letters was this:

YOU WILL BE ASKED ONE QUESTION. YOU WILL HAVE TEN SECONDS IN WHICH TO ANSWER. BRAIN-CAPACITY IS MEASURED BY THE QUICKNESS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. IF YOU CAN'T ANSWER IN TEN SECONDS, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO THE \$10,000 IN CASH.

As the first coupon-holder entered H. R. rose and took from his pocket a huge roll of bills, all yellow-backs. He carelessly peeled off one of them and with a bow handed it to the Mayor. [Pg 245]

Everybody sat up straight. His Honor looked at it. It was for ten thousand dollars. He nodded and then silently passed it to a bank president, who in turn examined it, nodded, and passed it on to a

colleague. The reporters pressed forward.

"Experts in all kinds of small change," smiled H. R., pointing to the bankers.

The reporters' eyes followed the return of the ten-thousand-dollar bill to the Mayor. They also decided that H. R.'s roll was the most impressive demonstration of brute strength ever seen in New York.

Then H. R. asked his question, slowly, distinctly, enunciating carefully and smiling the while:

"What is it we have all heard about from earliest childhood and that we acknowledge exists; that is neither a person nor a beast, neither a thing nor an object, but something that no man can kill, though it is dead to-day; that all men need and most New-Yorkers neglect; that should be present everywhere and is found in no trade? The answer is a word of five letters and begins with A—the first letter of the alphabet, the first of the five vowels. There is another word, a synonym, which is now obsolescent, though it is at times used in poetry. But while either word will win the ten thousand dollars in cash now in the custody of the Mayor of New York, the word I particularly have in mind has five letters, of which the first is appropriately A, the Alpha of the Greeks, the Aleph of the Hebrews, and now the first of all the alphabets of European languages. It is logically the first letter because it is the first sound that man naturally makes—'A' or 'Ah!' The first letter! What is the word of five letters beginning with A that will give you ten thousand dollars? With 'A'! *Now!*"

[Pg 246]

Stop-watch in hand, H. R. began to move his left arm up and down like a referee at a prize-fight. He had astutely emphasized the fact that the word had five letters, of which the first was A. The mind of the coupon-holder was thus made to study the dictionary instead of thinking about the question itself.

It was inevitable as fate itself. The first man could not guess. Neither could the second nor any of the thousands. But before the applicant's indignation at the unfairness of the question and the shortness of the time could grow into fury H. R. exclaimed, "Time's up." Approaching the non-guesser, he whispered: "The name of the unsuccessful will *not* be given to the newspapers. Not by *us!* I thank you in the name of the poor starving people whose lives you have prolonged. That way to the seats. You can have your pick of the very best!"

In that simple way was bloodshed and the cry of fraud averted at one and the same time.

H. R. then delegated the task of propounding the aureate question to a dozen lieutenants. Without varying one word the lieutenants asked the men whose charity would feed the starving.

Not one won the ten thousand dollars.

One of the reporters with the air of a man whose life depends upon the bulletin-board asked H. R.:

"What's the answer?"

The others heard H. R. reply:

"Ten thousand dollars in cash!"

"Yes; but the word?"

[Pg 247]

"It is worth ten thousand of my dollars. You can make them yours."

"I guess it's a fake."

"That begins with an 'F.' Mine begins with an 'A.' The Mayor has the cash."

The reporter looked at the Mayor. His Honor's lips were moving inaudibly. He was going over all the words of five letters that began with an "A."

Among them was *Agony*.

Lubin again looked at the ten-thousand-dollar yellow-back and at H. R. and suddenly rushed out. On the way he collected nine erudite friends. They went to the nearest branch of the public library. Each got a dictionary and divided all the definitions under "A" into nine parts.

Nothing doing!

"I knew it was a fraud!" yelled the *Onward* man. "It isn't in the dictionary."

He fairly flew back to the Garden.

H. R. was just about to go into the arena. Lubin yelled:

"There is no such word in the dictionary. I protest against this—"

"You talk like an old-school Republican," said H. R., coldly, to Lubin.

It killed speech in the young man.

The Mayor clenched his right fist tightly. The ten-thousand-dollar treasury note lay crumpled within.

"Sir," said H. R. to him, with real dignity, "you have my word that the word *is* in the dictionary."

The Mayor, naturally thinking of political consequences, spoke, "Of course, Mr. Rutgers, I expect you to prove it."

"Sir, I shall see to it that you are re-elected!" H. R. said this so positively that his Honor blushed guiltily. "I am not stupid enough to endeavor to perpetrate so transparent a fraud as this young man charges me with. But it would be even greater stupidity to be unfair to honest guessers by telling Mr. Lubin or anybody else what the word is. It is of five letters and begins with an 'A' and it is in the dictionary. But I will tell you, your Honor, and you, Mr. Lubin, what I will do. I shall ask the question and give the answer to a man who will say whether it is a fair question and whether the word is a fair answer. His decision will be final. He will not, I am sure, send for the ten thousand dollars after he hears the answer."

[Pg 248]

The Mayor shook his head dubiously.

"Who is the man?"

Mr. Lubin, being young, went much further.

"There is no man in New York whose word—"

"Silence, sir! I know the man. If he says that the word answers the question, everybody in New York will be convinced—Socialists, Democrats, Republicans, Progressives, Suffragists, newspaper editors, and all."

"There can't be such a man," said Lubin, decisively.

H. R. smiled and turned to the Mayor.

"Your Honor, the man whom I will ask to vouch for my honesty and intelligence after I have confidentially disclosed the word to him, is the Cardinal Archbishop of New York. His word will be enough, I take it."

The Mayor beamed and said, "Certainly, Mr. Rutgers." He made up his mind then and there that H. R. must conduct his campaign for re-election.

"Even young Mr. Lubin, I take it, will not doubt the word of his Eminence."

Lubin was no fool. "Mr. Rutgers," he said, earnestly, "we hate our enemies, the capitalists. But we respect the only foes who are fighting us as we are fighting capitalism with honest convictions and real ardor. Of course, we think the Catholics—"

[Pg 249]

"Hold on, Lubin," said H. R., "that policeman's name is Flannery."

Lubin explained: "I was afraid you were going to give us a banker, Mr. Rutgers."

"*Never!*" said H. R. so emphatically that Lubin extended his right hand. They shook warmly.

A sound of applause came to their ears. The Mayor flushed with vexation. It was premature, he thought. He was wrong. It was Grace Goodchild.

Andrew Barrett ran in excitedly.

"Did you hear it?" he asked his chief. "Say, she is smiling to beat the band and the crowd is going crazy. Hear that?" And he began to dance a jig.

H. R. seized him by the arm and said:

"In exactly two minutes I shall enter."

Andrew Barrett rushed away to tip on the *vox populi*.

"Gentlemen," said H. R. to the reporters, "you had better go in."

They obeyed him. They were escorted to their table on the stage. They found there seven military bands that had volunteered their services and also their own weapons.

In the background of the stage was a huge placard:

FIFTY THOUSAND PEOPLE CAN BE SERVED, FED, AND FIRED IN 6¾ MINUTES
BY OUR SYSTEM!

S. A. S. A., Dept. T.
O. K.
H. R.,
Sec.

[Pg 250]

At each reporter's place was a typewritten sheet containing intelligent statistics of this stupendous charity.

The reporters saw in the arena long strings of tables, each six hundred and eighteen feet long, and benches to match. Each guest was allowed nineteen and one-half inches. The dishes were of water-proofed paper stamped S. A. S. A. Above each table were aluminum-painted pipes with faucets every ten seats for soup, milk, tea, and coffee.

"By keeping the tea, coffee, and soup in circulation wholesome warm drinks are secured," read the official statement, "besides obviating the assistance of eight hundred and sixteen waiters, who would have had to walk an aggregate of six hundred and seventy-seven miles from tables to kitchen."

The solid food was brought to the scores of small serving-tables by means of overhead conveyors and traveling-cranes, a sort of gigantic cash-carrier system operated by electricity. The food came in individual covered dishes, also of water-proofed paper. Everything was automatic. The S. A. S. A. system prevented spilling, waste, delay, inefficient waiters, and the dissatisfaction of the guests.

"You will observe," went on the official statement, "that for the first time in history the beneficiaries of the bounty of their fellow-men are treated as honored cash guests and not compelled to wait. The bread of charity is hard, but not when served by the S. A. S. A."

Leaflets containing much the same information had been placed in each of the thousands of seats in the Garden in lieu of programs. As each man entered he saw the pipes and the traveling-cranes and the mechanical waiters, and read the placard on the stage.

[Pg 251]

"Ain't it great?" inquired every charitable ticket-buyer. "*In six and three-quarter minutes!* No regiments of waiters. Everything automatic. Say, that H. R. is a wonder!"

It naturally took some time before they remembered to look at the starving people who were sitting at the long tables waiting to be fed.

They saw haggard faces, sunken-eyed, pale-lipped men and women and children. They saw trembling hands that fidgeted with knives and forks that were obviously unnecessary. They saw women at the tables trying to still whining children. They saw gray-haired heads fallen on soup-plates utterly exhausted from inanition.

They saw starving and penniless human beings by the thousand.

And the spectators, hosts of these guests, ran over the faces and the forms of the men and women and children—all alike in that all were hungry and all were penniless. And the same thought struck them all, and they expressed it audibly, with gusto, as though they were original thinkers, with the modesty of professional epigrammatists. All the spectators said:

"Say, it will be great to see them eat!"

New York's great big heart had spoken in no uncertain accents!

"And the greatest of these is charity."

[Pg 252]

XXIV

Just after the applause that greeted Grace Goodchild's arrival had begun to subside, and the public was about to demand that the feast, for which they had paid, begin a bugle blew.

H. R., who was Fame since he was initials, entered the arena.

Instantly the well-trained Public Sentiment Corps began to shout, angrily:

"*Sit down! Sit down!*"

That, as intended by H. R., made all rise to their feet.

Then, and only then, did H. R. advance into the arena, followed by the Mayor of the City of New York, the Bishop of the Diocese of the same, and the other dignitaries.

The applause that came from the members of the Society of American Sandwich Artists was not applause. It was fervor, frenzy, fury. They yelled and shouted with the enthusiastic recklessness of free men who knew that after their throats went dry ten beers, also free, would cure.

The audience, seeing and hearing their fellow-men applaud, felt themselves left out of something. They were free men. They therefore also applauded, even more frenziedly.

No beers; not even knowledge; merely insistence upon political equality!

[Pg 253]

In front of the Goodchild box H. R., whose progress resembled Buffalo Bill's minus the curls, paused. He looked intently at Grace Goodchild.

She knew something was expected of her—something spectacular, thrilling, befitting the imperial consort. She stared back at H. R. agonizedly. Couldn't he prompt her? What was she to do, and how and when?

"Grace! Grace! Grace!" shouted the free sandwiches.

Instantly as well as instinctively the other ninety-nine beautiful perfections rose in their boxes and waved their handkerchiefs.

The crowd, drawn thither by one of the noblest charities of the age, went wild. Grace was rich! She was theirs! They cheered what belonged to them!

Grace Goodchild, actually urged by her aristocratic friends, rose and bowed to H. R. with a queenly air.

H. R. bowed low to her and walked on.

When he reached the stage all the bands began to play the national anthem almost together.

A huge American flag was dropped from the middle of the roof to remind New York what its nationality was.

When the bands finished playing there flashed a dazzling electric sign over the stage.

In huge letters of light the people read:

WELL DONE, NEW YORK!

H. R.

The great building rocked under the applause.

New York can always be trusted to applaud itself.

The lights of the sign went out. H. R. motioned to his stage-manager.

[Pg 254]

In the back of the stage the curtain that told of the wonderful feeding system—50,000 people, 6¾ minutes!—fell.

A hush also fell on the audience, for back of it was another white sheet on which everybody read:

WATCH YOUR GUESTS EAT

YOU ARE FEEDING THEM!

H. R.

The audience, metamorphosed against its will into charitable hosts, now remembered the starving fellow-beings who were there to eat.

H. R. motioned. A bugler advanced to the front of the stage and sounded, *Charge!*

The soup began to pour out of the faucets. In fourteen seconds 12,137 cups of steaming soup *à la Piccolini* were before the guests.

The audience applauded madly. It was perfectly wonderful what charity could do—in fourteen seconds!

The guests were very hungry. The soup, however, was very hot. This made the drinking audible to the remotest recesses of the Garden.

Again the bugle blew. The charitable crowd instantly ceased to look at their guests and gazed at the electric traveling-cranes carrying laden trays. Over six thousand well-fed spectators pulled out their watches and timed the entrée.

It took twenty-nine seconds to place the entrée before the guests.

"Quick work!" said the watch-holders, approvingly. It took the guests much less than twenty-nine seconds to eat the entrée.

[Pg 255]

The bugle blew for the third time.

The roast appeared. The rear curtain dropped. Behind it was another on which could be read, without the aid of binoculars:

WATCH THEM EAT!

YOUR TICKET DID IT!

H. R.

It happened exactly as H. R. had told Bishop Phillipson. Each charitable person thought of his particular ticket and looked for his individual guest among the 12,137.

Each charitable person felt that his twenty-five cents had made possible the entire feast. At that moment H. R. could have been elected to any office within the gift of a free and sturdy people.

The guests began to eat more slowly.

The hosts, filled with kindness and the desire to help their fellow-men by getting their money's worth, began to shout:

"Keep it up!"

"Go on!"

"Eat away!"

"Fill up! Fill up!"

"It's free! It's free!"

Charity is not dead, but sleepeth. When it awakens, it is ruthless.

Presently men and women at the tables, who had thought they were in paradise surrounded by angels, began to throw up their hands and shake their heads helplessly.

A storm of hisses greeted the ingratitude. Fat hosts began to shout:

"Fakes!"

"Fraud!"

"Take 'em out!"

In self-defense some of the guests began to rub their paunches. Here and there those who remembered close experiences with Christian mobs rose in their benches ostentatiously, let out their belts, and sat down again determinedly.

The hosts clapped madly. They understood, and therefore forgave. Then the hosts began to think that fifteen cents would have been enough.

The bugle blew. Dessert was served. It was determinedly put away.

Having convicted themselves of both charity and extravagance, each host felt that he was not only a philanthropist but a New-Yorker.

The bugle blew again. The paper dishes were gathered up, and also such of the knives and forks as the guests had not put in their pockets. The trays were whisked away by the traveling-cranes.

Suddenly all the lights went out. With the utter darkness a hush fell upon the vast audience. Then from all the bands came a mighty crashing chord. Instantly there blazed an electric sign that stretched from one side of the Garden to the other above the stage.

And both hosts and guests saw an American flag in red, white, and blue lights, and below it, in letters ten feet high, they read:

AND THE GREATEST OF THESE

IS CHARITY

H. R.

Everybody cheered, for everybody agreed with the sentiment. Some even thought it was original.

Then all the lights were turned on again. The tables were carried away by the cranes. The guests, directed by H. R.'s lieutenants, formed in line and paraded around the Garden. The lame, the old, the young, the hopeless, the wicked, the maimed—all who had hungered—marched jauntily round the vast arena that their benefactors might see who it was that really had made the Mammoth Hunger Feast a success. They carried their heads erect, proudly, conscious of their importance in the world. The benefactors thereupon cheered the beneficiaries. By so doing they showed what they thought of the benefactors. It was none the less noble!

The reporters looked at their watches. A full page on Saturday night is no laughing matter to the make-up man. One of them rose and asked H. R.:

"Is this all? We've got to write—"

"It is *not* all!" answered H. R., and motioned to the trumpeter, who instantly blew the Siegfried motif. The crowd looked stageward. The rear drop-curtain showed in high letters:

DANCING!

The guests hesitated.

The curtain was lowered a few feet. Above "Dancing!" the crowd now read:

FREE OF CHARGE!

Everybody started for the floor.

H. R. left the stage and walked into the Goodchild box. Grace had been receiving congratulations all the evening until she had convinced herself that this was her dinner. It was all H. R. could do to force his way through the plutocracy in the Imperial Box. Talking to Grace at the same time

[Pg 256]

[Pg 257]

[Pg 258]

were three young men who never before had accepted Mrs. Goodchild's invitations to marry Grace. But Grace was now the most-talked-of girl in all New York. And she was officially very beautiful and Goodchild *père* was not enough. And Grace was very kind to all of them. All empresses are kindly when they haven't Dyspepsia or Dynamite Dreams. All unpleasant things seem to begin with a "D." There is Death and Damnation; also Duty.

Mr. Goodchild frowned when he saw H. R. in the box. But when he saw that H. R. never even looked at him he became really angry.

Mrs. Goodchild looked alarmed and hissed, "Don't you talk to him, Grace!"

Grace, knowing herself desired by the most eligible young men in her set, decided to squelch H. R. in public. H. R., however, walked past everybody, looking neither to left nor right. Feeling themselves treated as so many chairs or hat-racks, the *élite* of New York began to feel like intruders.

Then, as an imperial mandate is given, H. R. said to Miss Goodchild:

"We're needed!"

He offered her his arm. The young men rose and made room for him. Duty called, and they never interfered with duty.

Grace hypnotically obeyed, for H. R. was frowning. Together they walked down to the floor of the Garden. [Pg 259]

The Public Sentiment Corps did their duty. They had not yet received the beer. They shouted, frenziedly:

"H. R.! H. R.! H. R.!"

The public took up the cheering. Thousands of outstretched hands reached out for his. But H. R. merely bowed, right and left, and walked to the middle of the floor.

"Smile at them!" he whispered, fiercely, to Grace.

She did. She knew then what it was to be a Queen. She felt an overpowering kindness toward all these delightful, simple people. Reggie was not brilliant, but that wasn't expected of a Van Duzen. She did not love Reggie, but she *liked* him. As Mrs. Van Duzen she would always have what she liked. She would never marry H. R.! It was reposterous.

The band began to play. The crowd, instead of dancing, moved toward the sides—to give H. R. room to dance.

Never before on Manhattan Island had such a triumph of personality fallen to the lot of any man.

H. R. put his arm about Grace Goodchild. She shrank from the symbolism of bondage.

"The world is looking on!" he admonished her.

Knowing that she danced very well, she now had but one fear—that her partner might make her ridiculous.

But H. R. was the best dancer she had ever honored.

She felt her resolution not to marry him slipping away. He led divinely. She felt that she herself had never danced so well in her life. He brought out the best that was in her.

"Ever try the Rutgers Roll?" he whispered, tensely. [Pg 260]

"N-no! she gasped.

"Let yourself go!"

When a woman lets herself go, all is over except the terms of the capitulation. She let herself go desperately, because she was forced to do it; fearfully, because of the appalling possibility of a fiasco.

She did not know how it was done. She had looped the loop and was still dancing away—a new but unutterably graceful undulation of torso and rhythmical leg work and exquisite sinuous motions of the arms and hands.

A storm of applause came to her ears, a hurricane steeped in saccharine. A man who could dance like that was fit to be any girl's husband!

The *élite* flocked on the floor and began to indulge in old-fashioned specialties, some of which were nearly a fortnight old. You heard delighted remarks:

"That's Mrs. Vandergilt!"

"There goes Reggie Van Duzen!"

"Look at Katherine Van Schaick!"

Then the New York that Americans call ruffianly, impolite, vulgar, selfish, spendthrift, money-loving, self-satisfied, and stupid, also began to dance decorously! The veteran reporters did not

believe their eyes, but they made a note of the fact, nevertheless.

Grace was nearly out of breath. She said, "I'm—I'm—I'm—"

"Certainly, dear girl." And H. R. deftly piloted her out of the crush. They stopped dancing, and he gave her his arm. She took it.

"Grace," he said, "when will you marry me?"

"Never!" she answered, determinedly. "And you must not call me Grace."

"Right-O!" he said, gratefully. "I'll call to-morrow afternoon. Shall I speak to Bishop Phillipson, or will father—" [Pg 261]

"I said *never!*" she frowned.

"I heard you," he smiled, reassuringly. "I—"

Andrew Barrett and the reporters came up to him.

"What about the men that fell for the beer?"

"Oh, give 'em the left-over grub, if you boys think it's right. But don't print it. The W. C. T. U. would howl at the thought of giving food to people who had first wanted booze."

Grace looked on, marveling at the way he ordered things done and at the way men listened to his words.

"But what about that ten-thousand-dollar cash to the coupon-holders?" asked young Mr. Lubin, finally taking his eyes off the beautiful capitalist. Feeling that he was beginning to condone with capitalistic crimes, he spoke sternly to H. R. in self-defense.

"Oh yes!" said H. R. and turned to Grace. "My dear, I'll have to leave you. Shall I take you to mother?"

Reggie Van Duzen saved him the trip.

"Say, Mr. Rutgers, could I have—"

"Yes, my boy!" gratefully smiled H. R. He shook hands with Reggie and said, very seriously, "*I leave her in your care!*"

Reggie, who was very young and careless, flushed proudly. Here was a man who understood men! He would protect Grace with his life. And it gave him a new respect for other women.

"I don't blame you, Grace," he said, with his twelve-year-old's smile that clung to him through life and made even poor people like him. "He is a wonder! Beekman Rutgers had the nerve to tell me that all the Rutgerses are like H. R. What do you think of that?" [Pg 262]

Grace answered, "Certainly not!"

She was not going to marry H. R., but if you intend to have it known that you have refused to marry a man who is crazy to marry you, the greater the man the greater the refusal. She added, with conviction:

"There is only one Rutgers like that and his first name is Hendrik."

Reggie nodded, looked at her, sighed, and began to dance.

He didn't touch H. R. as a dancer.

"Can you do the Rutgers Roll?" she asked.

"No!" he confessed.

She could never marry Reggie. She knew it now. But of course she would not marry H. R.

In the mean time H. R., accompanied by the reporters, drove to the Cardinal's residence. They explained their mission to a pleasant-faced young priest and sent in their cards.

The young priest began to make excuses and spoke of the lateness of the hour.

H. R. said to him, deferentially: "Monsignor, we have come to the Cardinal because he is the supreme authority in this case. The Mayor of New York and the representative of the Socialist press, Mr. Lubin, here, have agreed to leave it to the decision of his Eminence."

The Cardinal sent back word that he would see Mr. Rutgers.

H. R. went in alone. He saw not the head of the Catholic hierarchy, but a man in whose eyes was that light which comes from believing in God and from hearing the truth from fellow-men who told him their sins. H. R. bowed respectfully before the aged priest.

"How may I help you? asked the Cardinal. He was an old man and this was a young man. No more; no less; both of them children. [Pg 263]

"Your Eminence, I am the unfortunate American who in his misguided way has tried to feed the hungry in order that New York's grown children may realize that charity is not dead. If I have

used the methods of a mountebank it is because I have labored where God had been forgotten, almost."

"Generalities are not always verities, though they may come close to them. I know about your work. I shall be glad to do what I can for you."

"Thank you, sir. I promised to give ten thousand dollars in cash to any New-Yorker who could answer this question: What is it we have all heard about from earnest childhood and that we acknowledge exists; that is neither a person nor a beast, neither a thing nor an object, but something that no man can kill, though it is dead to-day; that all men need and most New-Yorkers neglect; that should be present everywhere and is found in no trade? The answer is a word of five letters and begins with 'A.' There is a synonym that, though not exactly obsolete, is at least obsolescent."

"Five letters? Is it in English?" smiled the Cardinal.

"It is in every good English dictionary. I think the dictionary is the only place in which I can find it nowadays."

"Oh no, my son." And the Cardinal shook his head in kindly dissent.

"Reverend sir, I said anybody with brains could guess it."

"It was not an ingenuous question, Mr. Rutgers."

"It was a coupon that entitled anybody who held it to answer the question and get ten thousand dollars. It was part of a ticket for which the holder paid twenty-five cents to feed a starving fellow-being. But what I wish you to do is to assure the reporters that it was a legitimate question. The word is *Anima*."

[Pg 264]

"I knew it."

"Because you use it every day."

"But your condition—"

"New York's condition, your Eminence," corrected H. R., politely. "I said the synonym, *soul*, would answer. Nobody won the ten thousand dollars. New York will cudgel its brains because it did not win the ten thousand dollars. In searching for the missing word it may find something more precious—the missing *soul*."

"Your way is not our way, but perhaps—" The Cardinal was silent, his kindly eyes meditatively bent on H. R.

"The reporters, your Eminence—" began H. R., apologetically.

"Ah yes!" And the white-haired prelate accompanied H. R. to the room where the reporters were waiting.

"I have heard Mr. Rutgers's question. The word of five letters beginning with an 'A' I think answers it, from his point of view, which is not unreasonable. I cannot say that the inability to guess proves the non-possession of brains—"

"The Cardinal knew at once," put in H. R.

"But that nobody should have guessed is astonishing."

"They were not all Christians," explained H. R.

"What is the answer?" asked a reporter.

"A word of five letters beginning with 'A,'" said H. R.

[Pg 265]

"Can't we publish it?"

"It is our secret now. New York is very rich. When it discovers that one word—or its synonym of four letters—it will be infinitely richer in every way."

The reporters brightened up. They saw columns and columns of guesses. But the Cardinal looked thoughtful. Then he said to H. R.:

"Come and see me again."

"Thank you. I will, your Eminence."

The Cardinal bowed his head gravely and H. R. and the newspaper men left.

"Are you a Catholic?" the *World* man asked.

"No," answered H. R., doubtfully.

"All roads lead to Rome," interrupted Lubin, with a sneer.

"Excepting one, Lubin," said H. R., pleasantly. "Keep on going, my boy. It's nice and warm there."

[Pg 266]

The newspapers did nobly. Too many prominent names were involved for them not to print the news. There was an opportunity for using real humor and impressive statistics in describing the new labor-saving machinery. The marvelous efficiency of H. R. as a practical philanthropist, demonstrated by his elimination of people who had money with which to buy food, and the simple but amazing efficacy of his Thirst-Detector raised the story to the realm of pure literature.

There was also a serious aspect to the entire affair. All the hungry men, women, and children in Greater New York that had no money had been fed. Assuming, as was probable, that most of the hungry were not bona-fide residents of New York, it showed that in the metropolis of the Western World less than one-thousandth of the total population were hungry and penniless. No other city in the world could boast of such statistics.

But H. R.'s work was not done. Before he retired for the night, knowing that his position in society and in the world of affairs was established on an adamant base, he nevertheless composed thirty-eight communications for the Public Sentiment Corps to send out the next day to the newspapers. A sample will suffice:

[Pg 267]

It has been clearly proven that New York is a great big city with a great big heart. As always, it responded generously to the call of Charity. The Hunger Feast at Madison Square Garden was an extraordinary bit of municipal psychology and an illuminating object-lesson. Why not make permanent a state of mind of the public which does so much to dispel the danger of a bloody revolution? Social unrest can be cured by only one thing: Charity! Man does not need justice. He needs the good-will of other men. The newspapers have it in their power to check the hysterical and un-American clamor against individual fortunes. They can throw open their columns! Treat Charity as if it were as important as baseball or at least billiards. Carry a regular Department of Charity every day. Give your readers a chance to be kind. It will be a novelty to many, but it will help all—the giver no less than the beneficiary. If you will agree, Mr. Editor, I'll send check.

Other specimens emphasized the non-sectarian phase of such charities as that conceived and carried to success by one of the most remarkable men in a city where the best brains of the country admittedly resided. Intelligent charity, wisely discriminating, truly helpful, had been placed for all time among the possibilities. Systematized charities were delusions, chimeras, thin air. There was a demand for the opportunity to be decent and kind. Let the newspapers supply it. "If your readers want lurid accounts of murder trials and divorce cases, let them have them. If they want expert advice on how to help their fellow-men give it to them, also. It remains to be seen whether there is one newspaper in New York that knows real news when it sees it!"

There were thirty-eight epistolary models in all.

In the afternoon of the day following the Mammoth Hunger Feast H. R. called at the Goodchild house.

[Pg 268]

"Frederick, tell Miss Grace—"

"She 'as *gone*, sir!" said Frederick, tragically.

"Did she leave word when she would return?"

"She 'as *gone*, sir!" persisted Frederick, in abysmal distress at the news and at his inability to convey it in letters of molten meteors. He added, "To Philadelphia."

It sounded to him like Singapore. He did not think there was much difference, anyhow.

"Philadelphia?" echoed H. R., blankly.

"Yes, sir!" said Frederick, with sad triumph.

"Whatever in the world can she—" H. R. caught himself in time. He nearly had reduced himself to the level of humanity—well called dead level—by confessing ignorance aloud.

"Mrs. Goodchild is at 'ome, sir!" suggested Frederick, ingratiatingly.

"Damned good place for her!" muttered H. R., savagely, and gave Frederick a five-dollar gold piece. In some respects, Frederick admitted, America was ahead of the old country.

H. R. walked away frowning fiercely. He went nearly a block before he smiled. Love always interferes with the chemistry of the stomach and hits the brain through the toxins. What an ass he was not to have realized the truth on the instant:

Grace had run away from him!

He returned to his office and told Andrew Barrett to set the Public Sentiment Corps at work on the thirty-eight models he had prepared. Then he wrote forty-two more. The consciousness of Grace's confessed weakness gave him an eloquence he himself had never before known. They were masterpieces.

The newspapers always know they have made a bull's-eye when they get letters from their [Pg 269]

readers. It is an obvious fact that a man who writes is a steady customer—at least, until his communication is printed.

The Public Sentiment Corps merely started the ball rolling. An avalanche of letters from all sorts and conditions of men, women, and merchants descended upon the editorial offices.

It became clear, even to the newspapers, that people in New York were willing to give, but they didn't know how. The papers, therefore, announced that they would thereafter run Charity as a regular department. It would be strictly non-sectarian. The world's greatest authorities and most eminent philanthropists had been asked to contribute—not money; articles. The *World* printed a full-page biography of St. Vincent de Paul and satanically invited some of its pet aversions to send in their autobiographies.

All the papers informed the charitable men and women of New York that checks, clothing, supplies, etc., could be sent to the Charity editor.

All the papers, also, invited H. R. to accept the editorship of the page. His duties would consist of allowing his name to be printed at the top of the page.

He declined their offers with profound regret, but promised to give interviews to the reporters whenever they wished. Personal matters precluded his acceptance of their kind invitations.

The personal matters consisted of the boom in sandwich advertising. It was not uncommon to see "Sandwich-board Maker, approved by the S. A. S. A.," in signs in various parts of the city. A new industry!

[Pg 270]

XXVI

In the mean time Grace was in Philadelphia. She had gone there for sundry reasons. The telephone calls told on her nerves. Mr. Goodchild had to install a new one, the number of which was not printed in the Directory but confided to intimate friends. Requests for autographs, interviews, money, food, advice, name of soap habitually used, permission to name massage ointments and face lotions after her, contributions to magazines, and ten thousand other things had been coming in by mail or were made in person by friends and strangers until Grace, in desperation, decided to go on a visit to Philadelphia. She craved peace.

Ruth Fiddle had long urged her to come. Grace had agreed to be one of her bridesmaids in June and Ruth naturally wished to discuss marriage, generally and particularly.

Ruth delightedly met Grace at the station. Two young men were with her. One was her fiancé. The other was a very nice chap who had blood, brains, and boodle. His ancestors had been William Penn's grandfather's landlords in Bristol, England, and he himself had once written a story which he had sent to the *Saturday Evening Post*. His father was in coal, railroads, and fire insurance.

They decided to adjourn to the Fairview-Hartford for luncheon. Before so doing they talked.

[Pg 271]

Ruth asked a thousand excited questions about the Hunger Feast, fame, and the Rutgers Roll. Grace answered, and then confided to Ruth her iron resolve never to marry H. R. She admitted that he was as great as the papers said, even greater, and, besides, good-looking. But her determination was inflexible.

Ruth, to show she approved, told Grace that Monty—the writer—was her fiancé's chum and African hunting-companion. Monty himself told Miss Goodchild that there was a good story in the whole affair. In fact, two stories. In both of them the heroine—he looked at her and nodded his head convincingly. "Drawn from life," he added. "Of course I'll have to know you—I mean, the heroine—better. But don't you think she'd make a great one?"

She wasn't thrilled a bit. She was not even politely interested. What was such talk, Grace impartially asked herself, to one who had been madly cheered by thousands?

Still, he was a nice boy, not so consciously clever as New-Yorkers who chose to regard themselves as vaudeville wits.

Finally they got into the waiting motor and went to the Fairview-Hartford, where the eating is better than in any New York hotel.

As they were about to enter the dining-room Grace Goodchild put on her restaurant look of utter unconsciousness and stone deafness and blindness, which had grown into a habit since she became famous.

She entered the dining-room ahead of the others, as usual. She took nine steps before she stopped short. Her face went pale.

Nobody had stopped eating!

Nobody had turned around to stare!

[Pg 272]

Nobody had stage-whispered, "There she is!"

No woman had said, "Do you think she is as beautiful as the newspapers try to make out?"

Not one imbecile male look; not one feminine sneer! Nothing! No fame!

"What's the matter?" asked Monty in alarm.

Grace felt an overwhelming desire to stand there until the people looked, even if it took a year.

As the century-long seconds passed she barely could resist the impulse to shout, "Fire!"

"Anything wrong?" whispered Monty, with real concern.

"N-no-nothing!" she stammered, and followed Ruth, who had passed her, unnoticed.

Her color returned as wrath dispelled amazement.

For the first time since H. R. began to woo her in public places with sandwiches Grace Goodchild actually had to eat food in a restaurant. In New York famous people don't go to restaurants to eat.

She was distraite throughout the luncheon. She thought Monty was an ass.

And the other feeding beasts must have read the New York papers! There was absolutely no excuse.

In the evening the same thing happened. That is, nothing happened. The Fiddles' friends tried to be particularly nice to her by talking of the opera, novels, the dancing-craze, the resurgence of the Republican party, and cubism. It only made it worse. And not one knew the Rutgers Roll!

The next day Ruth and the young men took her to the Philadelphia Country Club. Same thing! And later to a dance at the Fitz-Marlton. Ditto!

Her good looks, her gowns, and her nice manners made a very favorable impression on all of Ruth's friends, male and female, young and old. Hang 'em, that's all it did!

[Pg 273]

It was like Lucullus being asked to eat sanitary biscuits.

She had wanted peace. But not in a burial crypt. On the fourth day of extinction she said to Ruth after breakfast:

"My dear, I must return to New York!"

"Oh no! Grace, darling, I've accepted seventeen—"

"I must, Ruth. I simply must!"

"But Monty is coming at one to take us to his father's—"

Grace felt like saying that Monty could take himself to Hades or to Atlantic City. But she merely shook her head. She dared not trust herself to speak. Ruth appealed to her mother. But Mrs. Fiddle shrugged her shoulders and said: "No use! New York!" She herself was a Van Duzen.

And so Grace Goodchild returned home, five days before she was expected.

"I couldn't stand it, mother," she explained, almost tearfully.

"Very well," said Mrs. Goodchild.

What else can a mother say in New York? And isn't it right to stand by your own flesh and blood?

Grace hesitated, full of perplexities and unformulated doubts and an exasperating sense of indecision. She felt like opening the book of her soul to other eyes. To hear advice or, at least, opinions.

"I want to have a heart-to-heart talk with you, mother," said Grace, hesitatingly. Then she apologized, self-defensively. "It concerns my future, dear."

"Yes, darling," said Mrs. Goodchild, absently. "I don't think. I'd like it quite like Celestine's— Grace, love, will you run over to Raquin's spring exhibition at the Fitz-Marlton and look at it? It is next to the black that Mrs. Vandergilt liked. I have an appointment with Celestine—"

[Pg 274]

Grace knew that the selection of a husband could wait, for fashions in that line do not change so quickly as in skirts. She dutifully said, "I will!" She also had her eye on one.

Before going to Raquin's display she stopped at Oldman's.

The store flunky opened the door of her motor and smiled happily when he saw who it was. She was made subtly conscious that he was dying to announce her name to the world at the top of his enthusiastic voice. Life in New York had its compensations, after all.

She entered. The shop-girls whispered to the customers on whom they were waiting. The customers turned quickly and stared at Grace Goodchild.

"She often comes here!" she heard the pretty little thing in charge of seventy-two glove-boxes say proudly to a client.

The girl who waited on Grace was a stranger. Nevertheless, when Grace told her "I'll take these!"

the girl said, "Very well, Miss Goodchild."

"Oh!" gasped Grace. "You know me?"

"What d'ye t'ink I am?" said the girl, indignantly. "Say, it was great, Miss Goodchild!"

The worship in the girl's eyes kept the language from being offensive.

"Thank you!"

"I hope you'll be very happy, Miss Goodchild," said the girl, and blushed. "Oh, I didn't mean to be—I—I couldn't help wishing it, Miss Goodchild!"

[Pg 275]

"I'm sure I'm very grateful for your good wishes," Grace told her, graciously.

The child's—age twenty-four—eyes filled with tears. As Grace walked away, Mayme's lips moved raptly. She was memorizing dem woids.

On her way out Grace went through the same craning of necks, the same vivid curiosity, the same half-audible murmurs, the same spitefulness in the eyes of the women who, though rich, were not famous. Everybody is so disgustingly rich nowadays that society had begun to applaud such remarks as, "I've had to give up one of my motors," or, "Jim says he won't put the *Mermaid* in commission this year; simply can't afford it."

At Raquin's wonderful exhibition of models Grace saw exactly what she wished to see. It would be worthy of her and of her throat. One who is photographed many times a week has to have gowns; not to have them is almost immoral. Grace was so concerned with doing her duty toward the public that she forgot that she had come to see the third one, next to Mrs. Vandergilt's black. She was nearly half-way home before she remembered what her mother had asked her to do.

Grace went back to the Fitz-Marlton. Dress was a public service. Mrs. Goodchild's clothes must tell the public whose mother she was.

She told the chauffeur "Home," and began to think.

Pleasure could be made a duty. Blessed indeed is she in whose mind, as in a vast cathedral, pleasure and duty solemnly contract nuptials.

This beautiful figure of speech in turn made her think of marriage. If she married Reggie or Mr. Watson or Percival or one of the others, what would her married life be? What?

[Pg 276]

One long visit to Philadelphia!

"I could kill him!" she said to the flower-holder, frowning fiercely. Happening to catch a glimpse of herself in the mirror for that purpose provided in an town cars, Grace smoothed her brow and smiled. A man would have required slathers of flattery to dispel ill-humor. With a woman, the truth is enough. A mirror does not lie. Providence is more than kind to them; even automatic.

If she wouldn't marry Reggie or the others and did marry H. R.— But how could she?

She was an imaginative American girl with a sunshiny soul and much vitality who lived in New York. She thought of her marriage to H. R. She thought of the newspapers! The mound of clippings that instantly loomed before her made her gasp.

What wouldn't the newspapers do when *she* married H. R., especially if H. R., prompted by love, really made an effort?

She was forced to admit that he was a remarkable man!

"Papa," she said aloud, "will never consent!"

Papa's life had been made miserable by H. R. Indeed, the only thing that reconciled him to the ungrateful task of living was the steady growth of the bank's deposits. It was due, Mr. Goodchild often declared, to his management. But he couldn't speak about H. R. without profanity.

Parental opposition was not everything. Marriage was a serious thing.

[Pg 277]

XXVII

The motor stopped. She had arrived at her house. The car door was opened by H. R.

She started back. Then she looked at him curiously, almost awe-strickenly, as though her wishes had taken on magical properties of automatic fulfilment.

Was this the same remarkable person she had almost deified on the way from Raquin's exhibition? What would he say? She prayed that he might not spoil everything, by some inanity.

He held out his hand to help her alight. Then he spoke.

"It was time!" he said, and walked beside her—but a couple of inches ahead. That was because, though he was an American husband-to-be, he also was a man, a protector, a leader. Such men

are cave-men minus the club.

Grace at times was not a true Goodchild. This time she said nothing.

Frederick opened the door. His face expressed no sense of the unusualness of the sight.

H. R., with the air of a host, led Grace into the drawing-room. He stood beside her in the gorgeous Louis XV. room.

"Grace," he said, gently, "for twenty-nine days I've been the unhappiest man in all New York. For five, the unhappiest in the entire world!"

[Pg 278]

"Will you kindly release my hand?" she asked. No sooner had the words left her lips than she realized they were piffle. Then she began to laugh. It was the first official acknowledgment that no social barriers divided them.

"Suppose," she asked, with a humorously intended demureness, "that I wished to use my handkerchief?"

H. R. with his disengaged hand took his own out of his pocket and held it to her nose.

"Blow!" he said, tenderly.

"I don't want to," she retorted and tried to pull away her hand.

He replaced his handkerchief in his pocket.

"All over but the mailing-list," he said to her. "Sit down here; by me!"

Something within her stirred to revolt. Unfortunately, he did not release her hand, but led her to the historic divan—part of the suite for which Mr. Goodchild had paid eighteen thousand five hundred dollars in the Sunday supplement. Marie Antoinette had been seated in that very place when de Rohan brought the famous diamond necklace to show her. (Same issue; third column, fourth page.)

"I think that for sheer, unadulterated impudence—" she began, without any anger, because she was too busy trying to decide what she must do to him to put an end to a situation that had become intolerable—at least in its present shape.

"Grace, don't talk nonsense. Just let me look at you."

He held her at arm's-length and looked into her eyes. He saw that they were blue and clear and steady and looked fearlessly at him—the stare of a child who doesn't know why she should be afraid.

[Pg 279]

If they don't watch out that fearlessness becomes anything but childish in New York.

He continued to stare steadily, unblinkingly, into them.

"I can't stand it! I can't stand it!" he said, hoarsely, and blinked his eyes. Then he closed them—tight. Coward!

She had felt his keen eyes bore through her garments, through her flesh, into her very soul of souls—a look that frightened until it warmed; and after it warmed, it again frightened—in another way.

She saw a wonderfully well-shaped head and very clean-looking hair and a very healthy-looking, clear-cut face and very strong shoulders and very masterful hands. And from all of him came waves that thrilled—the mysterious effluvia that compels and dominates the woman to whom Life means this life.

At length he spoke with an effort. "We shall be married in Grace Chapel." He grew calmer, and added, "People will think it was named for you!"

"I am not going to marry you," she declared, vehemently.

"No. I am going to marry you. After you are my wife we naturally will talk about it. That will enable us to learn whether we shall stay married or not. Grace," he said, earnestly, "I'll do anything you wish."

"Leave this house, then."

"It's *your* house, dear," he reminded her, gently, "and I am your guest. That puts it out of your power to enforce your desire. Don't you see?"

She tacitly admitted that there was an etiquette of hospitality by asking, coldly, "Why should I marry you?"

"I can't give you as many reasons as I might if you asked why I should marry you. The principal two are that I love you and that I am the only man whom Grace Goodchild can marry and still remain Grace Goodchild."

[Pg 280]

It seemed to her impossible that he could be sitting beside her talking about marriage seriously, and more than impossible that she could be sitting there listening.

"People know you as Grace Goodchild. After the marriage they will know you as the Grace Goodchild that H. R. has married. What would become of you if you cease to be Grace Goodchild?"

She thought of Philadelphia, and shuddered. But he thought he had not convinced her. He rose and said to her:

"Oh, my love! You are so utterly and completely beautiful that if I have a man's work to do I shall succeed only because the reward is you! I have come to the turning-point in my career and I must have the light of your eyes to guide me."

She did not love him and therefore she heard his words very distinctly. But she was a woman, and she was thrilled by his look and his voice and by his manner. He was no longer a mountebank to her, but an unusual man. And when she thought of not marrying him her mind reverted in some curious way to Philadelphia and its subtle suggestions of sarcophagi and the contents thereof. But this man must not think that he could win her by stage speeches even though they might be real. She said to him, determinedly:

"We might as well understand each other—"

"I am the creature; you are the creator," he quickly interjected. "You are very beautiful, *very!* but you have much more than beauty. You have brains, and I think your heart is a marvelous lute—" [Pg 281]

"A what?" she asked, curiously. No woman will allow the catalogue to be skimmed or obscured.

"A lute, a wonderful musical instrument that some day will be played by a master hand. When you cease to be merely a girl and become a woman, with your capacity for loving when you let yourself go! Ah!" He closed his eyes and trembled.

All women, at heart, love to be accused of being psychic pyromaniacs.

"*There will I give thee my loves!*" he muttered, quoting from the "Song of Songs."

She knew it wasn't original because he said it so solemnly. She dared not ask from whom the quotation was. It sounded like Swinburne.

"Come!" He was not quoting this time. He stood before her, his face tense, his eyes aflame, his arms stretched imploringly toward her.

She met his gaze—and then she could not look away. She saw the wonderful man of whom the papers had printed miles of columns, who had made all New York talk of him for weeks, who was young and strong and comely and masterful, who had an old name and a fighting jaw, whose words stirred the pulses like a quickstep on the piccolo.

And his eyes made her understand what was meant by actinic rays. They were looking at her, piercing through her garments until she felt herself subtly divested of all concealments.

And then she trembled as if his eyes physically touched her! She thrilled, she blushed, she frowned—for she felt herself desired. And her thoughts became the thoughts of a woman who is wooed by life, by love, by a man's red blood and her own. Her New York inhibitions turned to ashes. Life-long mental habits withered and shriveled and vanished in microscopic flakes until into her self-hypnotized consciousness there came the eternal query of the female who has stopped running, "What can I give to this man?" [Pg 282]

And Hendrik, seeing her face, held his shaking hands before her, impatiently beckoning to her to come. Some unseen spirit took her slim hands and, without consulting her, placed them in his.

And then he kissed her.

The heavens flamed. She pushed him from her and sank back trembling upon the divan on which Marie Antoinette was not sitting on the day when de Rohan did not bring the diamond necklace that did not cause the French Revolution, though Mr. Goodchild had paid eighteen thousand five hundred dollars for the historic suite, in the Sunday supplement. [Pg 283]

XXVIII

It is difficult for a man to know what to do after the first kiss. A second kiss is not so wise as appears at first blush. It impairs mental efficiency by rendering irresistible the desire for a third. A banal remark is equally fatal. To tell her, "Now you are mine in God's sight," is worse than sacrilegious; it is conducive to acute suffragism and some polemical oratory. To say, "Now I am yours for ever," may be of demonstrable accuracy, but also conduces to speech.

Hendrik Rutgers was no ordinary man. He knew that one kiss does not make one marriage nor even one divorce. But he knew that he was at least at the church door and he had a wonderful ring in his waistcoat pocket. He therefore became H. R. once more—cool, calm, master of his fate.

It behooved him to do something. He did. He fell on his knees and reverently bowed his head. And then she heard him say, "Grant that I may become worthy of her!"

Then his lips moved in silence. She saw them move. Her soul trembled. Was she so much to this man?

Great is the power of prayer even in the homes of the rich, however cynics may sneer.

He did not glance at her, feeling her eyes on him. When he judged it was time he looked up suddenly, rose to his feet, and, in a diffident, apologetic voice, observed:

[Pg 284]

"Forgive me, dear! What did you say?"

What could she say? She therefore said it:

"Nothing!" very softly.

"I was very far from New York—and yet you were with me, my love!"

She thought of Philadelphia and her hand sought his with that refuge-seeking instinct which cannot be statuted away from them.

He met her half-way. He raised her hands to his lips and his disengaged left sought his waistcoat pocket where the ring was.

"She is in the drawing-room, sir, with Mr. Rutgers," came in faithful Frederick's warning voice, raised above the menial's pitch.

"What!" they heard Mr. Goodchild ejaculate. Then the titular owner of the house entered.

H. R. politely bowed.

"How do you do?" he said, easily. "You are a trifle inopportune. Grace and I were talking over our plans."

Mr. Goodchild turned purple and advanced. Grace rose hastily. H. R. meditatively doubled up his right arm, moved his clenched fist up and down, felt his biceps with his left hand, and smiled contentedly.

Mr. Goodchild remembered his manners and his years at one and the same time. With his second calm thought he remembered the reporters. He gulped twice and when he spoke it was only a trifle huskily:

"Mr. Rutgers, I have no desire to make a scene in my own house."

H. R. pleasantly pointed to a fauteuil.

[Pg 285]

"I must ask you—"

"Sit down and we'll talk it over quietly. You will find," H. R. assured him, earnestly, "that I am not unreasonable. Have a seat."

Mr. Goodchild sat down.

H. R. turned to Grace and with one lightning wink managed to convey that everybody obeyed him—excepting one, whose wish was a Federal statute to him.

She looked with a new interest at her father. It was, she realized, the eternal conflict between youth and age. Love the prize! *Gratia victrix!*

"I—I—am willing to admit"—Mr. Goodchild nearly choked as the unusual words came from his larynx—"that you have shown—er—great cleverness in your—er—career. But I must say to you—in a kindly way, Mr. Rutgers, in a kindly way, believe me!—that I do not care to have this—er—farce prolonged. If you are after—if there is any reasonable financial consideration that will—er—induce you to desist—I—you—"

"You have relapsed," interrupted H. R., amiably, "into the language of a bank president. Suppose you now talk like a millionaire." It was not really a request, but a command.

Mr. George G. Goodchild obeyed.

"How much?" he said.

Grace looked as she felt—shocked. She had not fully regained her normal composure. But this was a man who had kissed her. Was he to be bought off with money? The shame of it overwhelmed her. She listened almost painfully to H. R.'s reply.

"I am now," H. R. impassively said to Mr. Goodchild, "waiting for you to talk like a father."

Mr. Goodchild stared at him blankly.

"Like a father; like a human being," explained H. R. "Grace is no bundle of canceled checks or a lost stock certificate. She is your daughter."

[Pg 286]

"Well?"

"Excuse me; I mean she is your own flesh and blood—the best of your flesh and blood, at that. Your wishes cannot be considered where her happiness is at stake. Therefore what you think best is merely your personal opinion and hence of interest to yourself and to nobody else."

Mr. Goodchild quickly opened his mouth, but before the sound could come H. R. went on, hurriedly, "Suppose you had set your heart upon her becoming a mathematician. Would that make her one?"

"Never!" instantly declared the non-mathematical Grace.

Mr. Goodchild shook his head violently and again opened his mouth. But H. R. once more surpassed him in speed and pursued, calmly argumentative:

"Or suppose you did not believe in vaccination. Is your opinion to be allowed to prevail against the advice of your competent family physician until Grace gets the disease and you are forced to acknowledge that you were wrong? Or would even the sight of the most beautiful face in the world pitted and pockmarked fail to shake your own faith in your own infallibility?"

Grace shuddered. "*Father!*" she exclaimed, horror-stricken, and glared at Mr. Goodchild. She was now thinking of paternal opposition in terms of smallpox.

"But—" angrily expostulated Mr. Goodchild.

"Exactly," agreed H. R., hastily. "That's it. Now for a favor. Will you let me talk business with you? *My* business!"

Mr. Goodchild's business was to know all about the business of others. But he did not take it home with him. However, before he could do more than shake his head, H. R. went on: [Pg 287]

"I am organizing six companies."

That sounded like good business. But Mr. Goodchild nodded non-committally from force of habit.

"The S. A. S. A. Imperial Sandwich Board Corporation. Capital stock, one million, of which forty per cent. goes to the public for cash, forty per cent. given to me—"

"Forty?" irrepressibly objected Mr. Goodchild.

"Forty," repeated H. R., firmly. "I am no hog. I get what my ideas, designs, and patents are worth at a fair valuation. And twenty per cent. goes to the S. A. S. A."

"Why?" came from Mr. Goodchild before he could realize that he was speaking bankerwise.

"Because the S. A. S. A. will insist upon the company's boards being used by all our customers. And besides, as head of the S. A. S. A., I vote that twenty per cent. I thus control sixty per cent. and—"

Mr. Goodchild brightened up, but remembered himself and said, very coldly:

"Go on."

"We shall manufacture sandwiches of all kinds, at from one dollar to ten thousand dollars and upward, and—"

"Dreadful word! Loathe it!"

"—The S. A. S. A. Memento Mori Manufacturing Company to manufacture and sell the statuettes of the Ultimate Sandwich. Same capitalization. Same holdings. You see, I have sold my ideas, designs, and patents so that later on nobody can say my companies were overcapitalized. There are also the Rapid Restaurant Service Appliance Company, and four others. Same capitalization; same holdings. The money is all raised. And let me say," finished H. R., sternly accusing, "that the people who furnish the cash and buy the stock get *something* for their money." [Pg 288]

"That's all very well," began Mr. Goodchild, contemptuously, "but—"

"Exactly," said H. R. "I propose to transfer all our accounts to your bank. You know you said you'd like to have mine when I became famous."

"I know nothing about your companies, and care less. But I want to tell you right now—"

"What interest are you going to allow us on our balances?" cut in H. R.

"No interest!" said Mr. Goodchild in a voice that really meant "No Grace!"

H. R. turned to his sweetheart and, desiring to forestall desertion, took her hand in his and said to her:

"Grace, this house is a very nice house. You have spent many happy hours here. But it is, after all, only a house. And New York is *New York!*"

And Philadelphia was *Philadelphia!*

Grace's hand remained in H. R.'s.

"You can't have her!" said Mr. Goodchild, furiously.

"Who can't have whom?" asked Mrs. Goodchild, entering the room.

H. R. released Grace's hand, approached Mrs. Goodchild, and, before she knew what he was going to do, threw his right arm about her and kissed her—a loud filial smack.

She quickly and instinctively put one hand up to her hair, for the strange young man had been a trifle effusive. But before she could transform her surprise into vocal sounds the stranger spoke, in a voice ringing with affectionate sincerity not too playful, you understand, but convincing, nevertheless:

"She inherits her good looks, her disposition, and her taste in dress from you. I saw it the first time I met you. Don't you remember? And I warn you now that if I can't marry Grace I'll kill that husband of yours and marry *you!*"

To prove it, he kissed her again, twice.

"How dare—" shouted Mr. Goodchild.

"I am not sure," said H. R. to Mrs. Goodchild, "that I want Grace now. Between thirty-two and forty a woman is at her best."

He patted her shoulder, as we paternally do with the young ones, and went back to Grace. It all had happened so quickly that only H. R. was calm.

"My dear!" said Mrs. Goodchild, looking helplessly at Grace.

"What is it, mother?" said H. R., appropriating the affectionate words. And as she did not answer he asked, generally. "What do you say to the eighth?"

"An eighth?" echoed Mr. Goodchild, almost amiably, thinking, of one-eighth of one per cent.

"Of June!" said H. R. "That gives you ample time for everything, Grace. And, remember, give the reporters the detailed list of the trousseau."

"There isn't going to be any marriage. And there isn't going to be any nauseating newspaper articles with pictures of intimate lingerie enough to make a decent man blush."

"A really decent man always blushes with shame when he does not give *carte blanche* to his only daughter," said H. R. with great dignity.

"Mr.—er—Rogers," said Mrs. Goodchild.

[Pg 290]

"Rutgers," corrected her prospective son-in-law. "The 'g' is hard. It's Dutch, like Roosevelt, Van Rensselaer, and Cruger."

"But we don't know anything about your family," she said, very seriously.

"Do you know," asked H. R., pleasantly, "the Wittelbachs?"

"It's beer, isn't it?" she said. It might be the best brewing blood in Christendom, but still it wasn't Wall Street or real estate.

"Good shot!" exclaimed H. R., admiringly. "It is the patronymic of the reigning house of Bavaria. You know, Munich, where beer is the thing. And do you know the Bernadottes?"

"I've heard of them," replied Mrs. Goodchild, made wary by her non-recognition of a sovereign house.

"It is not French delicatessen, but the royal family of Sweden. And the Hapsburgs? The Emperor of Austria belongs to them. And Romanoff? The Czar of Russia would answer to that if he voted. And there are also the Hohenzollerns and the Bourbons and the Braganzas. And then," he finished, simply, "there is *Rutgers!*"

"It seems to me," put in Grace, coldly, "that I have something to say—"

"Empress, you don't. Just look," interrupted H. R. "Of course, the date is subject to your approval. I didn't have any luncheon. Will you tell Frederick to bring some tea and a few sandwiches—"

"Damnation!" shrieked Mr. George G. Goodchild. "Is a man to be insulted in his own home? Get to hell out of here with your sandwiches!"

"George!" rebuked Mrs. Goodchild, placidly. She never frowned. Wrinkles.

[Pg 291]

"Yes, George!" maniacally mimicked her husband. "It's sandwiches! Sandwiches! Sandwiches! Everywhere! Yesterday I discharged my secretary. I told him to send out for a chicken sandwich for me and I heard him give the boy the order: 'Son-in-law for Mr. Goodchild. Cock-a-doodle-do!' At this week's meeting of our directors Mr. Garrettson asked me: 'How is the King of the Sandwiches? Living at your house yet?' And the other jackasses all laughed. *Sandwiches!*"

He turned to his daughter, and fearing that she was in the conspiracy, asked her, vehemently: "Do you wish to be known all your life as the Queen of the Sandwiches? Do you? Do you wish your humorous friends to say to you, Grace, will you have a caviare husband?"

"No!" replied Grace. Fame was fame, but ridicule was Hades.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Goodchild.

"Tell Frederick," said H. R., fiercely, "to bring in fifteen Rutgerses, if you prefer to call them that."

"That isn't funny," rebuked Grace, coldly. "I don't think you are accustomed to surroundings—"

"No; it's hospitality. I'm starving."

"You'll have sandwiches for breakfast, luncheon, and dinner, my child," Mr. Goodchild told Grace, angrily but intelligently. "In the newspapers!"

"Of course I won't marry him!" said Grace, decisively. "It's preposterous."

H. R. went up to her. She shook her head. He spoke very seriously:

"Grace, when people tell you that I have given free sandwiches to New York they mean that I have taken the poorest of the poor, the pariahs of commerce, the despised of the rabble, poor human derelicts, souls without a future, without a hope, worse than dirt, poorer than poverty, and I have made them *men!*"

[Pg 292]

"Yes, but s-s-sandwiches," blubbered Grace.

"I took these victims of society and capitalism and organized them, and then I emptied them into the golden Cloaca Maxima that you call Fifth Avenue, and lo! they emerged free men, self-supporting, well-fed, useful, artistic. They have been the efficient instruments of fame. It is they who have made you known from one end of the city to the other."

"Yes; but sandwiches!" doggedly repeated Grace.

"I have worked," said H. R., sternly, "with human souls—"

"Sandwiches!" corrected Mr. Goodchild.

H. R. flushed angrily.

"The sandwich," he told them all with an angry finality, "is here to stay. Our net receipts, after paying big wages, are over one thousand dollars a day. What do you think I am, an ass? Or a quick lunch? Or a bank president? *Pshaw!* We've only begun! A capitalization of over five millions at the very start and the business growing like cheap automobiles, and me owning forty per cent. of the stock and controlling sixty per cent. in perpetuity! These men have made me their leader. I will not forsake them!"

"Can you give me," said Mr. Goodchild, seriously, "evidence to prove your statements?" If the love affair was not to end in an elopement it would be wise to have a business talk with this young man, who, after all was said and done, had a valuable asset in his newspaper publicity.

"You may be a wonderful man," said Grace to H. R., "but all my friends would ask me if I am going to have a mammoth sandwich instead of a wedding-cake! I ask you not to persist—"

[Pg 293]

H. R. smiled sympathetically and said: "You poor darling! Is *that* all you are afraid of?"

She thought of Philadelphia and a quiet life, and she shook her head sadly. Why couldn't he have made her famous by unobjectionable methods.

But H. R. said, "I'll guarantee that my name will never again be associated with sandwiches—"

"You can't do it!" declared Grace, with conviction, thinking of humorous American girls. "When they are friends all you have to do is to take out the 'r' to turn them into fiends."

Mrs. Goodchild said nothing, but frowned. It had just occurred to her that here they all were, amicably talking with the man who had made their lives grievous burdens. Mr. Goodchild also was silent, but shrewdly eyed H. R.

"I'll do it!" repeated H. R., confidently.

"How can you without killing everybody?" challenged Grace, skeptically. "Everybody knows you as the leader of the sandwich men, and if you form companies—"

"My child," H. R. told her, gently, "I don't know anything about finance. That is why I want to get father's advice about my business. Every man to his trade. But I do know New York. I ought to, hang it! My grandfather owned what is now the Hôtel Regina, and— Well, look here! If by the first of June nobody even remembers that I had anything to do with sandwiches will you marry me?"

"Yes," said Mr. Goodchild.

If H. R. could do that he was fit to be anybody's son-in-law. If he couldn't, the annoyance would end.

[Pg 294]

"Grace?" asked H. R.

"I'm willing to take a chance for two weeks," said Mr. Goodchild, feeling certain he was displaying Machiavellian wisdom. But Grace shook her head.

"Everything you've done," she told H. R., "is child's play—"

"What!" interrupted H. R., indignantly. "Make New-Yorkers give money for charity that they might have spent for their own pleasure?"

"Nothing alongside of making 'em forget that you invented sandwiches. If it had been anything else, you might—I might—you—" She floundered helplessly. Her life for weeks had been so full of excitement that she could not co-ordinate her ideas quickly.

"You don't know me, dear," said H. R. "I hate to say it myself, but, really, I'm a wonder!"

He looked so confident, so masterfully sure of himself, so little like a dreamer, and so much like a doer, that Grace was impressed.

"Can you?" she asked, more eagerly than Mr. Goodchild liked to see. But then H. R. had never kissed him.

"With your hand for the prize and your love for my reward? Can you ask me if I can?"

"Yes, I can. Can you?"

"Yes!" he said. "But of course I'll need your help."

"My help?" Doubt came back into her eyes.

"Yes. This way." He took her in his arms and kissed her.

Mrs. Goodchild stared, open-eyed. Mr. Goodchild grew purple, and shouted:

"Here! This is—"

H. R. turned to him and said, "This is all right." And again he pressed his lips to hers and kept them pressed this time. [Pg 295]

"I won't have it!" shrieked Mr. Goodchild, going toward the young people, one fist upraised.

H. R. ceased kissing, and spoke rebukingly:

"What do you want me to do? Kiss her in the vestibule before ringing the door-bell, as if we were plebeian sweethearts? Or in a taxi in the Park? Listen: *Fear not to intrust your daughter to a man who never kisses her save in the sight of those who brought her into this world!*" H. R. spoke so aphoristically that Mr. Goodchild thought it was a quotation from Ecclesiastes.

H. R. took the ring out of his waistcoat pocket and gave it to Grace.

"Here, my love!"

It was a magnificent green diamond, the rarest of all. Mrs. Goodchild rose quickly and said, "Let me see it!" Mother-like, being concerned with her only daughter's happiness, she took the ring to the window.

Grace followed. It was her ring.

"Say, Big Chief," H. R. asked his prospective father-in-law, "do I get the sand—do I get some slices of bread with some slices of viands, two breads to one viand, and a cup of tea?"

"Tea be hanged! Have a man's drink," hospitably and diplomatically said Mr. Goodchild. There was still a chance of escaping. He knew what violent opposition had done to sentimental daughters.

"Yes, but you'll have to allow us a decent rate of interest on our balances."

"How much do you carry?" asked Mr. Goodchild, carelessly.

"Enough for Dawson to offer three per cent. But let us not talk business here. I'll call on you to-morrow." [Pg 296]

"All right. But Dawson can't do it, not even on time deposits, and—"

"Scotch for mine," said H. R. "Is Frederick coming?"

Mr. Goodchild was, after all, a gentleman. He rang for Frederick. He also was thirsty.

"Hendrik, it's beautiful," said Grace, enthusiastically. "But are you perfectly sure you can—"

"Empress, don't you wish it done?"

"Of course."

"Then, of course, it is done. You'll be able to yell '*sandwich!*' anywhere in New York and nobody will think of anything except that you are the most beautiful girl in the world. Give me another before Frederick brings 'em."

"Brings what?"

"Lamb chops!" answered H. R., who was a humorist of the New York school. "Quick!" And he kissed her twice.

"We'll have tea up-stairs if you're really going to be one of the family," said Mrs. Goodchild, with the dubious smile so familiar on the faces of mothers of New York girls.

"Come, Grace!" said H. R., taking her by the unringed hand. He knew better—by instinct.

It was a very satisfactory day. Such was the compelling force of his self-confidence that before he left the house Mr. and Mrs. Goodchild sincerely hoped he could accomplish the impossible and wipe out the sandwich stain from the old Knickerbocker name of Rutgers.

[Pg 297]

XXIX

The next morning H. R. called Andrew Barrett into the inner office.

"Shut the door," said he.

Andrew Barrett did so and looked alarmed—alarmed rather than guilty.

"To-morrow, and until further notice," said H. R., sternly, "you will tell the department-store sandwiches to parade in front of the various newspaper offices from morning until night."

"But not in Park Row, surely?"

"Exactly! And find out whether the business managers of the various newspapers have been holding conferences with the managing editors. They probably will—this afternoon or to-morrow."

"How can I—"

"By paid spies—office-boy scouts. Of course, lady stenographers being more in your line— No! Look me in the eye!"

Andrew Barrett blushed and said, feebly:

"I am taking the count, Chief."

"Very well. I shall now go out and do your work. See that you do mine!" And H. R. went out, leaving Andrew Barrett full of devastating curiosity.

"I wonder what he has up his sleeve now?" mused young Mr. Barrett. "I'll bet it's a corker!"

H. R. himself called on the head of one of the most progressive of New York's great department stores—a man to whom full pages on week-days were nothing. He, therefore, had heard of H. R., and also had used sandwiches. He greeted the founder of the S. A. S. A. with respectful interest. H. R. said, calmly:

[Pg 298]

"I am here now to make you a present of from ten thousand to fifty thousand dollars a year—in cash!"

Mr. Liebmann, of course, knew that H. R., though an aristocrat, was neither a fool nor a lunatic. He diplomatically asked, "And my gratitude for your kindness may be expressed just how, Mr. Rutgers?"

"By accepting the cash and putting it in your pocket, to have and to hold until death do you part."

"Mr. Rutgers, I am an old man and suspense is trying." And Mr. Liebmann smiled deprecatingly.

"I have come to show you how you may save the amount I have mentioned in your newspaper-advertising appropriation. You big advertisers are now helpless to help yourself. There are no rebates and you can't play one paper against the others. Those days are over. Will you hear me to the end and not go on at half-cock while I am talking?"

"Yes," promised Mr. Liebmann, impetuously.

"Mr. Liebmann, you must write a letter to all the advertising managers of all the newspapers, saying that you have decided to discontinue all advertising in the daily papers as soon as your contracts expire. Hold your horses! Explain that you intend to reach your suburban trade through the fashion magazines, local papers, and circulars, and that for Manhattan and Brooklyn you have decided to use sandwiches—Don't talk yet!"

"I am only listening," Mr. Liebmann hastened to assure him.

[Pg 299]

"The newspapers know that you are a Napoleonic advertiser. They will pay to your communication the double compliment of belief and consternation. They know you know your business and that you are not only ultra-modern, but a pioneer. You have always been a highly intelligent advertiser. You will then let me supply you with one hundred of our best men, who will parade in front of the newspaper-offices in full regalia, and also in plain sight of your dear friends, the advertising managers. You know their psychology. Take it from me, you'll win.

"The only thing you mustn't do is to call the reductions rebates. There is no way by which the papers can get back at you. If I can make New York feed the hungry, would it be very difficult for me to make the advertising managers act wisely? Of course, if your letter does not bring about a saving of not less than ten thousand dollars a year you will not have to pay a penny for the sandwiches. I wish nothing written from you. The word of a Liebmann is enough for a Rutgers. My family has been in New York long enough for you to know whether a Rutgers is a man of his word or not."

"I'd rather shake hands with you than save a million a year in advertising," said Mr. Liebmann.

H. R. looked him straight in the eye—suspiciously, incredulously, insultingly. Mr. Liebmann flushed and then H. R. said, earnestly:

"I believe you, Mr. Liebmann!" and shook hands.

Mr. Liebmann, bareheaded, proudly escorted him to the sidewalk. He thanked H. R. to the last.

H. R. called on the other liberal advertisers and, with more or less ease, succeeded in impressing them as he had Mr. Liebmann.

[Pg 300]

Then he visited the managing editors of all the daily papers. He began with the best. The managing editor was delighted to see the man he had helped to make famous.

"I have come," H. R. told him, "to ask a great favor of you. I am, as you know, very greatly interested in charity work. Your paper has been good enough to publish my views."

H. R. spoke with a sort of restrained zeal simply, not humorously, obviously as a one-idea man, a crank, still young and undyspeptic. The editor prided himself on his quick and accurate insight into character. He said:

"Oh yes; I know about your work."

"Thank you. Well, sir, I find my usefulness to the cause somewhat impaired by the persistence with which my name is associated with the merely commercial phase of sandwiching. You know the sandwich men commercially were vermin, and I have taught them to pay for their own food. I took paupers and unpauperized them."

"And the signs in your parade were great. I told them at the Union League Club that at least one poor man's parade had shown brains. Not a single threat! Not one complaint! Not one window smashed! Not one spectator insulted! It showed genius!" And the editor held out his hand.

"I am a Christian, sir," said H. R., gently.

"Well, I'll shake hands, anyhow, if you'll let me," said the editor, cordially.

H. R. took his hand and looked so embarrassed that the editor would have sworn he blushed. This was no publicity-seeker, no fake modesty. Yes, that must be it—a Christian, the kind editors seldom shake hands with.

[Pg 301]

"And so," continued H. R., earnestly, "if you please, if you would only tell your reporters not to mention me in connection with sandwiches I could do more for the cause. You see, what I did with the sandwiches was merely the entering wedge. I don't want you to think I am complaining of your reporters, sir; they have been more than kind to me; but if you could see your way clear to not speaking about sandwiches as though they were my personal property—"

"You are the man who gave free sandwiches to New York," smiled the editor, as though he had said something original.

The situation was more serious than H. R. had believed, but he said, with dignity:

"I made free men of pariahs, sir. That job is finished. The newspapers have helped nobly; and today, thanks to them, charity is brought daily before their readers."

"But it is less picturesque than your courtship of Miss Goodchild with sandwiches."

"There were"—and H. R. smiled deprecatingly—"peculiar circumstances about my personal relations with Mr. Goodchild. Of course, I also desired to prove to intelligent but not very original business men that sandwiching is the most effective form of advertising. It is like all art, sir. The personal quality gives to it a human appeal that no combination of printed words on a page can have."

"How do you make that out?" asked the editor.

"When you read a play you see the printed words; but when you see the same play well acted you find that the same words you have read and liked reach the public through the senses of sight and of hearing as well as through the intellect, and is thus trebly efficient on the stage. Now, sandwiching is beyond question the highest form of commercial advertising. It succeeds even in love! And—"

[Pg 302]

"I congratulate you," said the editor, heartily.

H. R. looked so serious that the editor found himself saying, with even greater seriousness, "What you say is extremely interesting."

"I have long studied—in my humble way—the psychology of the crowd. I have discovered some very interesting things—at least they are interesting to me, sir," apologized H. R., almost humbly. "I am led to think, indeed I feel certain, that the art of sandwiching is in its infancy. The marvelous imagination of the American people, their resourcefulness and ingenuity, will make the development of artistic sandwiching one of the most extraordinary commercial phenomena of the twentieth century. But personally I am not interested in advertising, sir, except as in this instance as a means to an end. When the result is reached that is the end of my interest. And so,

sir, though I feel gratitude for the noble work your paper is doing for the cause of charity, I really and honestly think that less attention should be paid to the business side of one of our successful experiments with the submerged tenth, and more to charity itself. Can't you tell your reporters that sandwiching at union wages has nothing to do with it?"

"News is news," said the editor, shaking his head regretfully. "We print what is of interest to our readers."

"If your readers were made to think of filling other people's stomachs instead of their own there would be less dyspepsia—and more newspaper-readers, sir. It is a discouraging fact that the world appears to be more concerned over making money than over the unspeakable folly of dying rich."

[Pg 303]

"We can do without death more easily than without money," observed the editor, sententiously.

"Oh no! Death was invented in order to teach men how to live wisely. This is the only reason why the cessation of the organic functions, which is life's one great commonplace, has at all times attained to the dignity of rhetoric. But I am taking your time. I hope you will be good enough to drop sandwiches and stick to charity. I thank you for your kindness; and—and," he finished, diffidently, "I should like to shake hands with you."

He looked appealingly at the editor, who thereupon shook his hand warmly.

"I'll do what I can for you, Mr. Rutgers. I am very glad to have met you. Anything we can do to help you in your efforts we shall gladly do. You are a very remarkable man and you have done greater work than you seem to realize."

H. R. shook his head vehemently, however, and retired in obvious confusion.

With a few trifling differences, due to the divers editorial personalities, he did the same thing to the other managing editors. All of them thought that none of the reporters really knew what manner of man H. R. was. Withal, all of them were right. He was a wonder!

On the next morning the eyes of the business managers of the great metropolitan dailies, morning and evening, were made to glow by twenty-seven letters from their biggest advertisers. The tenor of the communications was that, as soon as existing contracts expired, the twenty-seven biggest would do their urban advertising by means of S. A. S. A. sandwiches. They expected to reach the suburbs through fashion journals, circulars, and local media.

[Pg 304]

The advertising managers smiled, not only at the palpable bluff, but at the evidence of an infantile conspiracy. Before ten o'clock, however, the vast crowds in front of their very doors made them swear. Scores of sandwich men, advertising the said twenty-seven shops and the day's bargains, were parading up and down, causing said crowds to collect and to comment audibly and admiringly.

The advertising managers rushed to the managing editors to tell them that something must be done to prevent their sudden death. The managing editors, to a man, recalled H. R.'s prophecy of the marvelous growth of the most effective form of advertising.

"That H. R.," said the managing editor of the *Times*, "is a wizard!"

"You fellows made him," bitterly retorted the business manager. "He's had more free advertising than I can book in a hundred and ten years!"

"Why, he particularly asked me not to mention sandwiches!"

"Well, by gad, you'd better not!" Then, "What d'ye want?" he snarled at his first assistant, who came in with a sheet of paper in his right hand and a look of perplexity in both eyes.

The assistant silently gave him the copy:

ALL THE LEADING SHOPS AND THE BIG DEPARTMENT STORES OF GREATER NEW YORK ARE USING OUR SANDWICHES. THEY EMPLOY THE BEST ADVERTISING TALENT IN THE WORLD.

THEIR EXPERTS UNANIMOUSLY HAVE DECIDED THAT SANDWICHING IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF ADVERTISING YET DISCOVERED. IT IS THE CHEAPEST WHEN RETURNS AND RESULTS ARE CONSIDERED.

[Pg 305]

ARE YOU USING OUR SANDWICHES, MR. MERCHANT?

THEY WILL MOVE YOUR SHOP TO FIFTH AVENUE.

TRY IT! EMPLOY ONLY UNION MEN.

SOCIETY AMERICAN SANDWICH ARTISTS,
ALLIED ARTS BUILDING.

For the first time in history the familiar

O. K.
H. R.,
Sec.

was absent.

It bore out the managing editor's assertion of H. R.'s distaste of publicity.

"Go out and lasso your maverick advertisers," said the managing editor, sternly, after he had read the S. A. S. A. advertisement—full-page, too! "I'll take care of the news columns."

"The damned sandwich men are so thick in this town I'll have trouble in breaking through their lines."

"Use dynamite!" said the managing editor, savagely. He owned ten bonds of his own paper.

He then summoned the city editor and said, sternly:

"Mr. Welles, under no circumstances whatever must this paper mention sandwiches or sandwich advertising or the S. A. S. A."

"Did you see their latest exploit? Two hundred and seventy-six sandwiches to the block, by actual count. Talk about high art!"

"They have commercialized it," frowned the managing editor. "Not a line—ever!"

The same thing must have happened in all the other offices. The public talked about the advertising revolution and the wonderful new styles in boards; and they looked in the next morning's papers to get all the picturesque details, as usual. Not a word!

[Pg 306]

XXX

H. R. called, shortly after ten o'clock the next morning, at the Ketcham National Bank to discuss with his father-in-law-to-be interest rates on the balance he did not yet have.

Mr. Goodchild had slept over the matter. He had spent an hour in going over his annoyances and humiliations, and had failed himself with a wrath that became murderous anger when he compelled himself to realize that H. R. had it in his power to intensify the troubles of the Goodchild family. The marriage of H. R. with his daughter became worse than preposterous; it was a species of blackmail against which there was no defense. He could not reach H. R. by means of the law or by speech or by violence.

When his anger cooled, however, he saw that what he had done was to pay the young man the greatest compliment an elderly millionaire can pay anybody. The more formidable your enemy is, the less disgraceful is your defeat. Mr. Goodchild was as intelligent a man as one is apt to find in the office of the president of a bank; but he was susceptible, as all men are, to self-inflicted flattery. He therefore decided that H. R. was a problem to be tackled in cold blood, with both eyes open and prayer in the heart. The only plan of action he could think of was proposing to H. R. to accomplish an impossibility; in fact, two impossibilities. He also would treat H. R. amicably.

[Pg 307]

"Good morning, young man!" he said, pleasantly.

"Morning!" said H. R., briskly. "Now let's get down to cases. I expect you to—"

"Hold on!" said Mr. Goodchild, coldly, in order to keep from saying it hotly. "Aren't you a trifle premature?"

"No," said H. R. "I find I can give you a few minutes to-day."

"You'll have to use some of those minutes in listening to me," said Mr. Goodchild, trying to look as though this was routine business.

"I'll listen," H. R. assured him, kindly.

"You will admit that you have given me cause to—well, not to feel especially friendly toward you."

"Big men are above petty feelings," said H. R. "You will, in turn, admit that you made a mistake in not advancing me in the bank— Wait! I'll listen later, as long as you wish. You object, I suppose, to my methods; but let me point out to you that I have arrived! Where should I be if I hadn't been talked about? And where shall I land if I keep on hypnotizing the newspapers into giving me columns of space? You know what publicity means in business to-day, don't you? Well, just bear in mind that I not only make news, but, by jingo, I am news! There is only one other man in the United States who can say that, and you may have to vote for him for President, notwithstanding your fear of him. Wait!" H. R. held up his hand, took out his watch, and went on: "For an entire minute think of what I have said before you answer. Don't answer until the time is up. One minute. Begin! Now!"

[Pg 308]

H. R. held his hand detainingly two inches in front of Mr. Goodchild's lips. Mr. Goodchild did not open them. He thought and thought, and he became conscious that he had to argue with himself to find said answer.

"Speak!" commanded H. R. when the minute was up.

"The cases are not analogous. Publicity has its uses and—"

"It has this one use—that you can always capitalize it. It spells dollars—and, more than that, easy dollars, untainted dollars, dollars that nobody begrudges you and that nobody wants to take away from you—not even the Administration at Washington. Think over that for two minutes. And he pulled out his watch once more.

"Look here, I—"

"Damn it, don't talk! Think!" said H. R. so determinedly that Mr. Goodchild almost feared a scene would be enacted which he should regret after seeing it in the newspapers. "You have wasted forty seconds in overcoming your anger at my manner of speech," continued H. R., reprovingly. "Begin all over. Two minutes. Now!" And before Mr. Goodchild's wrath could become articulate he rose and walked over to a window.

H. R. stared across the street. It was there he had captured Fleming. How far away that day seemed now—and how far below! The two minutes were up. He turned to Mr. Goodchild.

"Look here; you bank presidents are an unscientific lot. You ought to be psychologists instead of being merely bookkeepers. It is knowledge of people you need—not of human nature at its worst, or of political economy, or of finance, but of people—the people who vote; the people who in the end say whether you are to be allowed to enjoy your money and theirs in comfort or not. Study them! You sit here and disapprove of my methods because they violate some rule established years ago by somebody as radical then as I appear to be now. It is not a question of good taste or bad taste. It was good taste once to kill each other in duels, and to drink two bottles of port, and to employ children in factories. The suffragettes are attacked for methods—"

[Pg 309]

"Do you mean to say you approve of their slashing pictures—"

"That is beside the question. If the suffragettes stuck to ladylike speeches and circulars they would be merely a joke at the club. The right of women to vote is a problem. Well, the suffragettes have made themselves exactly that—a problem! If they have not a sense of relative values it is because they don't get me to run their campaign for them. I could succeed without destroying one masterpiece. Maybe I will—some day. And then I could marry ten bankers' daughters if I were not in love with one. Let's come back to our own business. Do you think I have brains?"

"Well—"

"No, no! Remember what I have said to you and consider whether it is asinine; and think of what I have done and ponder whether it shows hustling and executive ability, and those qualities that mean the power to develop the individual bank account. Am I an ass or have I brains?"

"Yes; but—"

"All men of brains at all times have had more butts than bouquets thrown at them. I tell you now that I have gone about this business for the purpose of getting there. To become news, to be interesting to the public in some way—in any way—is the quickest way. Then you can pick your own way, a way that will commend itself to the well-bred nonentities who never accomplish anything. Well, I am famous; and it's up to me to decide what I shall do in the future to take advantage of the fact that when people hear of H. R., or see those two initials in print, they look for something interesting to follow. The least of my troubles is that I shall become one of your respected depositors. I don't drink; I am healthy—no taint of any kind, hereditary or acquired; I don't have to lie to get what I want or cheat to get all the money I need—and I need a lot. I've got ideas, and I don't fall down in carrying them out, because I don't go on at half-cock. I never move until I see my destination; and if there is a wall ahead I have my scaling-ladder all ready long before I arrive at the wall."

[Pg 310]

H. R. paused, and then went on more slowly: "When you get over your soreness at the raw deal the newspapers have given you, you will be glad to have a man of brains in your house. I don't want you to give Grace anything; but I tell you now I'm going to marry her, and you'd better begin to be reconciled to the idea of having me for a son-in-law. I want to be your friend, because I'm quite sure you will not enjoy having me for your enemy—not after I begin the counter attack."

It is always the delivery that does it, as Demosthenes triply assured posterity. Mr. Goodchild's eyes had not left H. R.'s face and he had listened intently to the speech. He did not grasp in full all that H. R. had said; but what really had emptied Mr. Goodchild of anger, and filled him with an interest which was not very different from respect, was the delivery. H. R.'s faculty of knowing how to speak to a particular auditor was instinctive. It always is, with all such men, whether they are famous or obscure, orators or life-insurance agents. It is very simple when you are born with it.

[Pg 311]

Mr. Goodchild, however, finding his own weapons of offense more dangerous to himself than to the foe, fell back on defense. To do so, he naturally began with a lie. That is the worst of verbal defenses.

"I don't object to you personally. I—I even admit that I made a mistake in not promoting you, though I don't know what position you could have filled here that would have suited you—"

"None; because you don't realize that banks need modernizing. None! Skip all that and get back to me as your son-in-law."

Mr. Goodchild, thinking of his two plans which were his one hope, asked, abruptly:

"Are you a man of your word?"

"Since I have brains, I am. Are you?"

"I object to your methods. Your speech I might overlook, though it comes hard. I am speaking plainly. Now you are known as the Sandwich Man. That would bar you from my club and from ever becoming a really—"

"But that will stop. It will stop to-day. I have told Grace that within a month nobody will ever connect my name with sandwiches."

"Will you agree not to marry or seek to marry my daughter, or annoy us in any way—in short, if a month from now you are still famous as the organizer of the sandwiches, will you stop trying to be my son-in-law?"

[Pg 312]

"Sure thing!" promised H. R., calmly. Mr. Goodchild was distrustful and looked it, which made H. R. add, impressively: "I'll give you my word that after to-day I'll never even try to see you or Grace, or write to her, or revenge myself on you. So far as I am concerned I'll cease to exist for you. And here's my hand on it."

He held out his hand in such a manner that Mr. Goodchild took it and shook it with the warmth of profound relief. Then he said, heartfully:

"If you do that—"

"Don't worry! It won't kill my business. I'll be just as famous as ever."

"The newspapers made you. Their silence will unmake you."

"Oh no!" And H. R. smiled as one smiles at a child.

Mr. Goodchild almost felt as though his head had been kindly patted.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Sandwiching is here to stay and—and my companies are organized. I'll change the dummy directors as soon as you and I decide which of your friends and clients shall be permitted to buy some of the stock my men haven't sold. For cash, understand! The newspapers have done their work. The newspapers in this instance are like incubators. I put in an egg. The incubator hatched it. Then I took the chick out of the incubator. Suppose the incubator now refuses to keep up the temperature of 102½ degrees Fahrenheit necessary to hatch the egg? Suppose the incubator gets stone cold? Well, let it! The chick is out and growing. And let me tell you right now that I am not going to let Wall Street financiers get their clutches on my chick. They'd caponize it. Talking about interest rates—"

[Pg 313]

"How big a balance do you expect to keep with us?" asked Mr. Goodchild. He did not like to admit the surrender.

"It depends on you." H. R. pulled out his watch, looked at the time, snapped it shut, and said: "I haven't time to go over the business; but I'll send one of my office men to tell you all you want to know. Listen to him and then ask him any questions you wish. So far as you and I are concerned we are beyond the sandwich stage. I'll send Barrett to you this afternoon. And, believe me, you are going to be my father-in-law. Good morning!" He left the office without offering to shake hands.

On his way out H. R. stopped to speak to Mr. Coster, to whom he owed so much for having led him, as a clerk with the springtime in his blood, to the president's office to be discharged.

"Well, old top, here I be!" said H. R., kindly humorous in order to remove all restraint.

"How do you do, Mr. Rutgers?" said Coster, respectfully.

The clerks looked at their erstwhile fellow-slave furtively, afraid to be caught looking. Was this Hendrik Rutgers? Was this what a man became when he ceased to be a clerk?

Ah, but a salary! Something coming in regularly at the end of the week, rain or shine! Gee! but some men are born lucky!

[Pg 314]

XXXI

H. R. returned to his office feeling that the big battle was about to begin. The preliminary skirmishes he had won. He had captured fame and must now begin his real attack on fortune. He spent an hour dictating plans of campaign for his various companies. Shortly before noon he told the stenographer to call up Miss Goodchild and inform her that Mr. Rutgers would be there in half an hour.

He had promised not to call on Grace for a month after that day. He must not make love to her. He was determined to keep his promise; but she must not forget him. He had accustomed her to

his impetuous wooing. In thirty days of inaction much might be undone if he did nothing.

He was punctual. He found Grace waiting for him, curious to know what had happened at H. R.'s conference with her father at the bank. Her curiosity made her forget many other things.

She expected a characteristic greeting from H. R., but his face was so full of adamantine resolution that her curiosity promptly turned into vague alarm. She had told herself she did not love him, but instinctively she now walked toward him quickly.

"What is it?" she asked.

He waved her back and said, hastily:

[Pg 315]

"Stop right where you are! Don't come any nearer. For the love of Mike, don't!"

She had been thinking of treating him coldly, to keep him at a distance.

"What is it?" she asked again, and again advanced.

"Don't!" said H. R., with a frown.

She now felt alarmed, without giving herself any reason for it.

"Wh-what's the m-matter?" she asked.

"You!" he answered. "You!"

She stared at him. He was looking at her so queerly that naturally she thought something had happened to her face. She looked into the mirror on her right. It was not so. Another look fully confirmed this. So she looked at him. His expression had lost some of its anxiety.

"I promised your dad," he explained, "that I would not see you after to-day, or call here, or try to make love to you by mail, or annoy you or him in any way until I had wiped the sandwich stain off your surname. I have a month in which to do it, and I promised all that! One month! Not to see you! But—"

He looked at her so hungrily that, born and bred in New York though she was, she blushed hotly and turned her face away. Then she felt the thrill by which victory is made plain to the defeated.

"But—but—" repeated H. R. through his clenched teeth, and took a step toward her.

Whatever she saw in his face made her smile and say, challengingly:

"But what?"

Being very wise, he caught his breath and said, sharply:

"Don't do that!"

[Pg 316]

"Do what?" she asked, innocently, and kept on smiling.

"I will not see you!"

"You won't?" She ceased to smile, in order to look skeptical.

"No, I won't; I'll keep my word, Grace." He was speaking very earnestly now. "I love you—all of you; the good and the bad, your wonderful woman's soul and your perennial childishness. You are so beautiful in so many ways that you yourself cannot know how completely beautiful you are. But I love more than your beauty. After it is all over you will realize that I can be trusted implicitly. Never has man been put to such a task. Don't you know—can't you see what I am doing?"

She knew; she saw. She felt herself mistress of the situation. She therefore said, softly:

"I shouldn't want you to commit suicide here."

Hearing no reply, she looked at him. He was ready for it. She saw his nostrils dilate and his fists clench and unclench.

"Then I won't see you. But—but you can see me," he said.

She frowned.

He went on: "I shall lunch every day at Jerry's—small table in the northeast corner. At one o'clock every day for a whole month."

Did he expect her to run after him? She said, very coldly:

"That wouldn't be fair."

"If you go to Jerry's for luncheon with one of your girl friends, and you see me eating alone, keeping bushels of wonderful news all to myself, is that making love to you?"

[Pg 317]

"Yes."

"No!" he contradicted, flatly. "But I'll do more— I'll let you tell Mrs. Vandergilt that you own the only engine of destruction available against man's stupidity."

Knowing that he was alluding to her beauty, she said:

"What are you talking about?"

"Well, I belong to you, don't I? And if women are to get the vote can't you tell dear Ethel's mother—"

"Do you mean old Mrs. Vandergilt?" she interrupted.

"Yes."

"Then say so."

"I will," he meekly promised. "You tell the old lady that you will insure success for the Cause by lending me to her. I've got a scheme that will do more in a month than all the suffragettes have accomplished in fifty years. You might get Ethel interested in my plan—"

"I won't!" She smiled the forgiving smile that infuriates. She lost her head. "You think I am jealous—that I'm—"

"I think not of you, but of myself, and of how I may keep my promise to your father and survive. If you see me, and can talk to me, I shall live honorably. Will you shake hands?" He held out his right hand. She ignored it. He deliberately took hers and led her to a chair. "Will you do what I ask, dear?" he entreated, humbly.

"No!" She stood there, cold, disdainful, refusing everything—even to sit down.

"Then," he said, tensely, "then I must—" He seized her in his arms and kissed her unresponsive lips. "I am not making love to you," he murmured. "I am not!" And he kissed her again. "I promised not to see you; and I won't—not even if you see me." [Pg 318]

He released her and was silent. She looked up and saw that his eyes were tightly closed.

"I'll be there," she said, triumphantly, "at one o'clock."

"I am a man of my word!" he said, fiercely.

"Every day!" she added, with decision.

She did not know that this wifelike attitude thrilled him as not even the kisses had; but he said, earnestly:

"No. I'm going now. It's good-by for a month. For a whole month!"

"Northeast corner table," she said, audibly, as though to herself. "Northeast cor—"

"Play fair!" he urged. "Amuse yourself with Mrs. Vandergilt." He looked at her as though he desired her to occupy herself with some hobby for thirty days. The sight of her face, and nothing else that she could see, made him say, "Good-by!" And he almost ran out of the room.

She went up-stairs to get her gloves. On second thought she called Ethel on the telephone and invited her to luncheon at Jerry's.

He was waiting for her at the northeast corner table when she and Ethel went in. Grace, who had been looking toward the southwest corner, where the exit to the kitchen was, turned casually and saw him.

"There's Hendrik!" she said to Ethel.

He had not risen. He looked up casually now and approached them.

"I was born lucky," he told them, and shook hands with Grace. To Miss Vandergilt he said, very seriously, "Are you Grace's friend?" [Pg 319]

"I'm more than that," answered Ethel; "I am the best friend she's got."

"Then I am doubly lucky. I have a table, Ethel. I want you to be a witness to the miracle." There was no reason why he should call Miss Vandergilt by her first name. Even Ethel looked it. But H. R. merely said: "Take this chair, Grace. Ethel—here."

"It seems to me—" began Grace, coldly.

"Your friends are my friends. The miracle, Ethel, is that I've promised not to make love to Grace for a whole month—thirty days; forty-three thousand two hundred precious wasted minutes!"

"Don't you sleep?" interjected Ethel, curiously.

"My poor carcass does, but not my thoughts of her. Now let us eat and be miserable."

It was a wonderful luncheon. H. R. let them do all the talking. He was at his coffee when Ethel mentioned her mother.

"Ah, yes!" said H. R. "By the way, has Grace told her?"

"Told her what?"

Grace caught his eye and shook her head with a frown.

"Very well, dear girl," he said to her. To Ethel he explained, "She doesn't wish me to tell you of her plan."

"Oh, do! Please!" said Ethel, eagerly.

"I'm in training for the position of her husband, Ethel," H. R. told her. "She says no—that's all; plain no!"

"Grace, tell him to tell me!" said Ethel.

"Shall I, Grace?" smiled H. R.

Ethel looked at her and smiled. It made Grace so furious that she said:

"I have no control over his speech."

[Pg 320]

"Then, Ethel, it is only that Grace has a plan for a suffrage campaign that—well, it isn't for me to boast of her strategy; but it's a sure winner. I thought she would tell your mother."

"It doesn't interest me," said Grace, very coldly, being hot within.

"It will after you're married," observed Ethel, sagely.

"That depends on whom I marry," said Grace, casually.

"So it does," assented H. R., calmly.

"I agree with Hendrik," said Ethel, more subtly personal than Grace thought necessary; so she pushed back her chair and took up her gloves.

"Same table, same time—to-morrow?" H. R. said this to Grace so that Ethel could hear it.

"No," said Grace.

"Very well," he said, meekly. "I'll be here just the same—in case."

She shook her head. Ethel, who was carefully not looking, saw her do it.

Grace did not appear the next day, but Ethel did, properly accompanied by her own mother. They walked toward the northeast corner, on their way to a near-by table. H. R. rose and approached them.

"Just in time," he said to them. "Thursday always was my lucky day."

They sat down. To the waiter he said:

"Tell the chef—for three; for me."

"Yes, Mr. Rutgers," said the waiter, very deferentially.

"What have you up your sleeve, Mrs. Vandergilt? And how near is victory?"

"You mean—"

"The Cause!" said H. R., reverently.

[Pg 321]

"I never heard you express an opinion," said Mrs. Vandergilt, suspiciously.

"You have expressed them for me far better than I could. Mine isn't a deep or philosophical mind," he apologized to the mind that was. "I merely understand publicity and how sheeplike men are."

"If you understand that, you understand a great deal," remarked Mrs. Vandergilt, sententiously.

"Grace thought—" began H. R., and caught himself in time. "You haven't talked to her about it?"

"Grace?"

"Miss Goodchild."

"No. Why should I?"

"No reason—only that she has what I, as a practical man, in my low-brow way, think is a winner. Of course the suffrage has long since passed the polemical stage. The question does not admit of argument. The right is admitted by all men. But what all men don't admit is the wrong. And all men don't admit it, because all women don't."

"That is true," said Mrs. Vandergilt, vindictively.

"Any woman," pursued H. R., earnestly, "can make any man give her anything she wants. Therefore, if all the women wanted all the men to give them anything, the men would give it. A woman can't always take something from a man; but she can always get it. To put it on the high plane of taking it as a right may be noble; but what I want is results. So long as I get results, nothing short of murder, lying, or ignoble wheedling can stop me. Grace and I went all over that; but she seems to have lost interest—"

"Yes, she has," confirmed Ethel, so amiably that H. R. smiled gratefully; and that annoyed Ethel.

"You have asked for justice," pursued H. R., addressing himself to Mrs. Vandergilt; "but it is at the ignoble side of man that you must shoot. It is a larger target—easier to hit." [Pg 322]

"But—" began Mrs. Vandergilt.

"If I were a woman my dream should be to serve under you and implicitly obey all orders. I'd distribute dynamite as cheerfully as handbills. Without competent marshals do you imagine Napoleon could have done what he did?

"Don't I know it?" said Mrs. Vandergilt, bitterly.

"How would you go about it?" interjected Ethel, who had grown weary of her own silence.

"I'd get the marshals. I'd get subordinates that, when your mother said 'Do thus and so!' she could feel sure would obey orders. The general strategy must come from her."

"I've said that until I was black in the face," said Mrs. Vandergilt. "I've told them—" And the great leader talked and talked, while H. R. stopped eating to listen with his very soul. With such a listener Mrs. Vandergilt was at her best.

"Mother, the squab is getting cold," said Ethel.

"The next time it will be cold in advance," said H. R., impatiently. "Go on, Mrs. Vandergilt!"

But Mrs. Vandergilt, knowing she could not finish at one luncheon, shook her head graciously and invited H. R. to dinner the next evening.

"I can hardly wait!" murmured H. R. [Pg 323]

XXXII

The dinner at Mrs. Vandergilt's home was H. R.'s initial social triumph. The first thing he did was to confess to Mrs. Vandergilt that what he desired above all things was to be her military secretary. All he asked was to serve the Cause so long as she led, and no longer.

"I hate failures," he told her. "I don't propose to be identified with any. If I did not see in you what I do I should not be here. I know creative genius when I see it. You paint the picture. I am only the frame-maker—necessary, but not among the immortals."

"You are more than that," she assured him, with a smile. He shook his head.

"I can fool the rabble; but you know the trick! Organize your personal staff. Fire them with your own enthusiasm. Of course they won't all have brains; but they will do to stop gaps and follow instructions."

And Mrs. Vandergilt, in order that all might know that great minds acknowledged a greater mind, cracked up H. R. to the sky. H. R.'s success was all the greater since he made a point of declining most invitations. He was seen only where most people wished to be seen. That made him talked about.

Grace heard about his stupendous social success. Since the demand for H. R.'s presence came from her social equals, he was at last a desirable possession. She stayed away from Jerry's in a mood of anger that naturally made it impossible for her to stop thinking of H. R. [Pg 324]

Meantime H. R. regularly, every day, sent a complete file of newspapers to the Goodchild residence. By his orders the Public Sentiment Corps bombarded the editors with requests for information as to the Society of American Sandwich Artists, and of sandwiching in general. He prepared learned and withal highly interesting articles on sandwiches, their history and development. He suggested over divers signatures that all court notices should be brought to the public's notice by sandwiches, thereby getting nearer to the picturesque town-crier of our sainted forefathers.

Not a single communication was printed. The department stores were holding out for lower advertising rates. Many of the letters asked questions about H. R. in his capacity as the greatest living authority on sandwiches. These, also, were ignored. On the other hand, to show they were not prejudiced, the papers continued to run the charity page and used suggestions furnished by H. R., giving him full credit when it came to philanthropies that had nothing to do with sandwiches.

The series of harrowing radiographs of diseased viscera, published with success by the most conservative of the evening journals, was one of H. R.'s subtlest strokes. And prominent persons took to contributing checks and articles, both signed in full, in response to H. R.'s occasional appeals in aid of deserving destitution.

Then the Public Sentiment Corps began to ask, with a marvelous diversity of chirography and spelling, why H. R. did not undertake to secure votes for women and employment for men. Mrs. Vandergilt, when asked about it by the reporters, replied: [Pg 325]

"H. R. is my most trusted adviser. Just wait! When we are ready to move we'll begin; and there

will be no stopping us this time!" They published her remarks and her photograph, and also H. R.'s.

Mr. Goodchild had tried, one after another, to get all the newspapers to attack H. R. viciously—then to poke fun at him; and he had failed utterly. When he read the Vandergilt interview, on his way home that evening, he decided to speak to Grace.

"Mrs. Vandergilt is crazy," he said.

"Have they sent her away?" asked Grace, her face full of excitement. Poor Ethel!

"Not yet; but I see she has taken up that—that—"

"Hendrik?" asked Grace, and frowned.

Mr. Goodchild nodded. Then he asked, suspiciously:

"You haven't seen him?"

"Yes; but not to—well, he hasn't made—he has kept his word to you. And the newspapers don't print anything about sandwiches."

"No—damn 'em!" he muttered.

"I thought you didn't want them to."

"I don't want you to have anything to do with him. It is perfectly absurd to think of marrying a fellow like that—"

"He can marry anybody now," she told him. Thinking of this made her so angry that she said, "He hypnotizes people so they think he is—"

"I know what he is," he interrupted. "I'd like to—"

"I suppose you would," she acquiesced; "but you can't deny he is an extraordinary person, and—"

"Do you love him?" he interrupted.

[Pg 326]

Grace hesitated. She had to in order to be honest.

"I—I don't know," she answered, finally.

"Great Scott! Do you mean to say you don't know that?"

"No; I don't," she replied, tartly.

She thought of H. R., of all he had done, of all he had said to her, of all he might yet do. And then she thought of the way H. R. had been taken up by the people at whose homes she dined and danced. She shook her head dubiously.

"Well, finish!" said her father, impatiently.

"He makes people do what he wants them to," she said, slowly; "though he says he will do what I wish him to do, and—"

"Can you make him do what he doesn't want to do?" challenged her father, with his first gleam of sense.

She thought of H. R.'s love of her.

"Yes," she said, thrilled at the thought of her power.

"Then make him give you up!"

Her father permitted himself a smile of incredulity, which made her say:

"I will!"

Mr. Goodchild rose. He patted her cheek encouragingly and said:

"I think you will, my dear."

"I am going to make him—"

"I beg pardon, but Miss Goodchild is wanted at the telephone, sir," announced Frederick.

Grace went to answer the phone. It was Marion Molyneux who spoke.

"Is it true, Grace, that your engagement with H. R. is off?"

"Who told you?" naturally asked Grace before she could think of anything else.

[Pg 327]

"Why, everybody is talking about it; and—"

"Everybody knows my business better than I do."

"Well, they say Mrs. Vandergilt doesn't give him time to—"

"Is he engaged to her?"

"Oh, dear! You are angry, aren't you? Well, I am glad it isn't true. Good-by."

How could the engagement be off when it never had been on? Grace made up her mind to talk to him very plainly, for the last time, that evening. She knew he would be at the Vandergilts' dinner dance that night. Well, she was going there, anyhow. Therefore she went. She almost had to elbow her way to where he stood. Mrs. Vandergilt was beside him; but Grace could see that H. R. owned the house.

"How do you do, my dear?" said Mrs. Vandergilt, so very graciously that Grace was filled with fury.

It was plain that H. R. was making a professional politician of Mrs. Vandergilt. Grace smiled at her—that is, she made her lips do it mechanically. Then she addressed the fiancé to whom she was not engaged:

"Hendrik!"

That was all she actually said, but, with her eyes, in the manner known only to women who are sure they are not in love, she commanded him to follow her.

"You see him all the time and we don't get a chance very often," protested a vulgar little thing whose father was a financial pirate of the first rank and had given her all the predatory instincts. "Go on, H. R.! Tell us some more. Do!"

Grace's eyes grew very bright and hard, and her cheeks flushed.

"I have news for you," she said to H. R., calmly ignoring the others.

[Pg 328]

"I am sorry, children," said H. R., regretfully. "Business before pleasure."

"Your business," persisted the vulgar little thing, "is to obey!"

"Hence my exit," he said, and followed Grace.

She led the way to the conservatory. She was conscious of her own displeasure. This enabled her to dispense with the necessity of finding reasons for her own feelings. She halted beside an elaborately carved marble seat, built for two, and motioned for him to sit down. He looked at her. She then said:

"Sit down!"

He obeyed. Then she sat beside him. The seat was skilfully screened by palms and ferns.

"I had a little talk with father this morning," she went on, and frowned—in advance.

"You poor thing!" he murmured, sympathetically, as though he were thinking of what she must have suffered.

As a matter of fact his mind was full of the conviction that she herself did not know which way she was going to jump and it behooved him to pick the right way.

"He asked me whether I loved you," she went on, sternly.

"Well, the answer to that was an easy syllable. When we go back you tell Mrs. Vandergilt that you have decided to allow me to serve under her. Don't worry; I'll be the boss. Ethel has played up like a trump—"

"I told him I didn't," she interrupted.

"You couldn't have told him that!" He smiled easily. "There was no occasion for it. Now tell me exactly what you did say to him."

[Pg 329]

He could see anger in her eyes—the kind of anger that is at least a first cousin to hatred.

"I said—"

"The exact words."

The change in his voice made her look at him. His eyes, keen, masterful, were fixed on hers. They looked hard, yet not altogether ruthless; and particularly they looked as though they could read thoughts with no effort, which made it necessary to tell the truth.

"I told him I didn't know," she said. To preserve her self-respect she sneered.

"What a wonderful girl you are!"

In his eyes she saw a great admiration. She could not tell what it was this man considered so wonderful; but, whatever it was, he knew exactly—and she did not!

"If I really loved you, shouldn't I know it?"

"Of course not. You are not the surrendering kind. The others are—born slaves, diminutive souls, toys, little pets. Souls like yours don't marry; they mate with an eagle! You will love me as I love you. And then there is nothing that we, together, cannot do! Nothing!"

She opened her mouth, but he checked her speech by saying, sternly:

"Why do you think it is that, having loved you, I cannot love any one else? Because I alone know what you are and what you will be! Grace, I promised your father I would not make love to you until I had deleted one word from our visiting-cards. It is done; but the month isn't up quite, and I won't make love to you. That's flat! I can't break my word."

[Pg 330]

He looked so determined that naturally she looked away and said, very softly:

"And—and if I should want you to?"

"You should want me to make love to you, but not to break my word!"

"But you say you love me," she complained.

"Love you!"

It flamed in his eyes and his hand reached for hers; but he checked himself abruptly. She extended her hand, but he edged away from her. She drew nearer to him. He retreated to the very edge of the seat. She was pursuing now. He bit his lip and frowned.

She no longer thought of other things. She knew he could not retreat any farther. She covered his hand with hers. He suddenly clutched it so tightly that he hurt her, and that gave her the fierce joy of success in love as she understood it. She felt like shouting: "Hurt me! Hurt me! I've got you!" But what she did was to murmur:

"Hendrik!"

"What?" he said, hoarsely, resolutely keeping his eyes from looking into hers.

"Hendrik, do you really love me?"

"My promise!" he whispered, tensely, and looked at her pleadingly. "Don't, dear!"

She understood him perfectly; so she smiled. It was her iron will against his. He must do what he did not wish to do, and do it because she wished it! She did not wish to kiss him; but she wished, hypnotist-like, to compel him to kiss her. With her eyes she beckoned him to come closer.

Knowing that this would clinch it he stared back at her with a pitiful appeal in his troubled eyes, and shook his head weakly, as though his soul, thinking of his honor, was saying: "No, no! Please don't!"

[Pg 331]

Her face moved toward him a little and stopped. Something within her was stamping its foot, saying: "Yes! Yes!"—like a peevish child.

H. R., continuing to follow the subtle strategy of the reversed position, stared fascinatedly at her lips. Then slowly, like a man in a trance, his face moved toward hers. On the very brink he paused and said, brokenly: "No! Oh, my darling! No! No!"

She said nothing, in order not to commit herself; but she smiled at him, while her eyes, luminous and blue, pounded away on his resolve, battering it to pieces. Nearer his face came—nearer—until his lips reached hers.

His honor had been wrecked on the coral reef; but all she knew, and all she cared to know, was that she had won! She was so certain of it and showed it so plainly that he knew he had better make it doubly sure; so he pressed his cheek against hers, that she might not see his face while he murmured:

"Now you can't cast me off!"

It was an entreaty, with the nature of which she was familiar from her literary studies; and her answer, eminently feminine, was:

"Never, dearest!"

He started to his feet abruptly.

"Don't follow me!" he said, harshly, and walked away very quickly.

When she rejoined the crush in the drawing-room she learned that H. R. had excused himself on the plea of urgent business and had gone.

"What is he going to do?" they asked her, eagerly.

They were sure it was something picturesque, but she saw in their excited wonderment the appraisal of her victory. The displeasure and suspicion in Mrs. Vandergilt's eyes gave her intense joy.

[Pg 332]

She was willing to pay for her victory. He loved her! She could make him do whatever she wished. It did not matter whether she loved him or not. There was now no reason, that she could see, why she should not marry him—if the worst came to the worst.

[Pg 333]

Grace did not hear from H. R. the next morning as she fully expected. Since expectation is disguised desire, she was vexed by his silence. She had conquered. Why did he not acknowledge?

She obeyed what she would have called a sudden impulse of no particular significance and called up his office. Andrew Barrett answered. He told her that H. R. had gone away—nobody knew whither—and would not return until the following Thursday.

H. R.'s move was so mysterious that it could mean but one thing: He was running away!

Merely to make sure of it, she went to Jerry's at one o'clock. The northeast corner table was there, but not H. R. However, she sat down and waited.

She ordered her luncheon herself, irritated at having to do what he should have done. If it was business that kept H. R. away, she ought to know it. The right to know everything was part of the spoils. When he came back there would be no more ignorance—ever again!

At three o'clock she went home. But as the days passed she became uneasy. H. R. was the only human being she completely dominated. Brooding on his inexplicable absence, her thoughts came more and more to take the form of the question that victrices always ask of high Heaven: "Have I lost him?"

[Pg 334]

That made her love him.

At noon on the 20th of May he telephoned to her:

"Meet me at the Plaza at four—for tea. Don't fail! Good-by!"

"Wait!" she exclaimed, angrily, rebellion surging within her by reason of his dictatorial tone of voice. She had been very anxious to see him, but not at that price.

He had wisely hung up the receiver, however. That compelled her to do what he had told her to do. She had something to say to him.

She found him sitting at a small table in the Palm Room. Ethel Vandergilt and Reggie Van Duzen were with him. She approached him frowning, because she ran the usual gantlet of stares, and overheard the usual murmurs: "That's Grace Goodchild! Do you think she is as pretty as—"

Ethel greeted her affectionately, and Reggie looked proud to be there. He was a worshipper of the dynamic H. R. But all that H. R. himself said, in his exasperatingly peremptory voice, was:

"Month is up to-day. Now for the test! Tell Ethel you want some sandwiches!"

Grace started slightly and realized that Ethel had not overheard H. R.—he had taken care that she should not.

"No! I—I'm afraid, Hendrik," she stammered, turning pale. Women love to gamble—in their minds, when alone.

"You? Afraid? Of anything?" He looked at her in pained amazement. "Look at me!"

She did.

"I—I'll marry you any—anyway," she said, to show it was not cowardice, but the reverse.

[Pg 335]

"Play the game!" he said, sternly.

Before she knew it she obeyed. She sat down limply and said:

"Ethel, I w-want a s-s-sandwich!"

"You poor thing! You're actually faint with hunger. Don't you want some bouillon? Waiter!"

"No; I want a sandwich!" said Grace, loudly. You would have thought she had said, "*Jacta est alea!*"

Ethel and Reggie heard Grace use that word. People all about them knew who she was and had proudly told their out-of-town companions all about H. R. and Grace Goodchild. They, too, heard Grace say she wanted a sandwich.

Not a soul smiled! Not having seen anything about it in the newspapers for a month, New York had forgotten that H. R. had wooed Grace with sandwiches. H. R. was as famous as ever, but his fellow-citizens no longer knew why or how.

The waiter took the order with unsmiling respect. Grace looked at H. R. almost with awe. He smiled reassuringly and asked her:

"Aren't you going to ask Ethel?"

"Ask me what?" said Ethel.

Grace was silent, because she was blushing like a silly thing in public.

"On the eighth of June," said H. R. "I suppose you won't mind being a—"

Ethel naturally interrupted him by saying to Grace:

"I'm so glad! Is it announced?"

"You're the first one we've told, dear girl," H. R. declared, solemnly. "Reggie, you will give me courage at the altar?"

"Will I?" chuckled Reggie, proudly, and insisted on shaking hands.

[Pg 336]

H. R. rewarded him. He said:

"Reggie, I'm going to let you help me in my campaign. I'm going to the Assembly in the autumn."

"Albany!" said Reggie, enthusiastically. "First stop on the way to Washington! There was Cleveland—and Roosevelt; and now—"

"Oh, Hendrik!" gasped Grace. She would help him all she could—at the receptions.

Then she looked at Ethel to see whether she, also, understood national politics. Ethel did. She said, with conviction:

"And we'll all vote for him, too!"

The waiter laid a plate of sandwiches before Grace.

H. R. stared at them—a long time, as though he were crystal-gazing. He saw the labor-unions, the churches, the aristocracy, the bankers, the newspapers, the thoughtless, and the hungry; and all were with him and for him. He was the only man the Socialists really feared. If he was H. R. to New York, why should he not become H. R. to the nation?

He saw himself on the steps of the Capitol on a 4th of March. It was typical Rutgers weather. The mighty sun was trying its best to please him and incidentally tranquilizing Big Business by shining goldenly. The clouds, however, were pure silver—with an eye to the retail trade.

In the distance he saw the monument erected with infinite pains to the one American who could not tell a lie. It was a great white finger pointing straight at heaven. It was as though George Washington's stupendous gesture meant, "That is where I got it from!"

That is the place from which everything good comes. It should not be difficult, H. R. thought, to convince his fellow-Americans of it. They had been accustomed to reading, every day, "In God we trust." It was on all the dollars.

[Pg 337]

"Hendrik!" said Grace.

H. R. started from his dream and passed his hand over his eyes.

"Grace," he said to her resolutely, "my work is just beginning!"

THE END

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK H. R ***

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