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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.

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.

"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.

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.

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.

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."

"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.

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.

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.

"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.

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."

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."

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.

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.

"*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.

"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.

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.

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.

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.

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—"

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?"

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.

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.