

"I'm not in the habit of speaking such falsehoods," urged Fred, to the happy girl, when they had all laughed at his account of his generalship.

Then it came time for Hawkes and Kipp to start for Joe's.

"May I come and see her often?" Hawkes asked the mother. She had been drawn toward him from the first, now his fearless, straightforward way went straight to her heart.

"You will always be welcome," she said, cordially.

"Come, Marie," he whispered, again drawing her to him, "tell me once more that you love me."

"I do love you!" she said, looking into his earnest eyes bravely.

Mr. J. Burrows was down on his luck. Ever since that exposure of his financiering methods by Mr. Grillis, customers had become so scarce that on a certain day, some two months after the events recorded in the last chapter, the broker's exchequer could not have honored a sight draft for a nickel. As he sat in the only chair his office afforded, his feet resting on the only other article of furniture, his desk, Mr. Burrows acknowledged with a groan, in which his very vitals must have participated, so hollow and deep it was, that he was done up—run down—or, in other words, wiped out of his last deal, as he metaphorically termed his chance of obtaining a livelihood. As Mr. Burrows sat, he reviewed the past. Those were halcyon days when he had entered into the fascinating profession of stock jobbing. Then the public were in, and it would have taken the fingers on both his hands to count the smallest day's customers. Landing the fish, he had facetiously termed the securing of a new order, and the term was singularly appropriate, for the number of nibblers who were thrown high and dry out of water were greatly in excess of those who swam on to the sea of prosperity.

Had Mr. Burrows any interest in or business with object lessons, the two flaring jets of gas at that moment illuminating his meditations, would have served excellently for illustrations of his life. Had one asked him why one jet would not have sufficed, he would have answered that unless something unforeseen turned up, his landlord would take the premises on the following day, and the gas company must collect their bill from the next tenant. Mr. Burrows, though he had experienced many reverses, had not learned to deny himself. When he had plenty, he was prodigal, wanting nothing. When he had nothing, he was sad, often despondent, but still prodigal, for he wanted everything.

As Burrows sat and mused, he became aware that some one was pacing up and down the hall. It was past the hour of closing, being nearly seven o'clock, and he wondered if it were some clerk, or struggling lawyer who had, like himself, lingered to brood over financial troubles.

The footsteps crossed and recrossed the hall in such an unceasing tramp that Burrows' wonder gave place to interest, then to curiosity. He was half out of his chair, to take a peep through the key hole, when the knob on his door turned. There was a minute's hesitation, and then the walker noiselessly entered.

Burrows, whose vicissitudes of fortune had rendered him acute in grasping at emergencies, was busily

scribbling, an expression of profound study on his face, so that the party entering walked around the chair without disturbing the diligent writer.

Burrows having at that second apparently run across a knotty problem, raised his head and hand as though in search of some book of reference, when his eyes fell on his creditor, customer, or at any rate late visitor. Schooled as was Burrows in dissembling, he could not repress a start when he saw before him the bloated face of Arthur Brigham.

Burrows was instantly on his feet, and sent his chair whizzing toward his visitor. Perching himself on the desk, he said, rapidly—

"Didn't hear you. I'm moving. Haven't got furniture in yet. Driven all up and have to work nights to keep ahead. How are you? Glad to see you. Anything I can do for you?"

"You're a lawyer, I believe," said Arthur.

"That's the profession I studied."

Burrows answered briskly. He had begun to rearrange the papers on his desk, but occasionally he cast furtive glances at the stock ticker in the farthest corner of the room, which, having been disconnected for more than a week on account of the nonpayment of rental, was looming gaunt and solemn, covered by a black cloth.

"Will you be at liberty this evening?" Arthur asked.

Burrows glanced hesitatingly at the sheet on which he had been writing.

"I'll see you now," he said, after a minute's reflection, "if what you have is important."

"The business can't be discussed here," said Arthur. "I'm an agent only; but before we go any farther, it's necessary that you answer me a question or two."

"Certainly; go ahead. Ask 'em," Burrows answered, abstractedly tapping his forehead with his pen. He appeared as though at least one-half of his brain was still with the client whose interests had been so abruptly broken in upon.

"In the first place," said Arthur, "are you well acquainted in Essex?"

"I am," Burrows affirmed, receiving another though moderate surprise.

"In the second place, can you keep your mouth shut?"

"How closely my mouth is sealed (Burrows exhibited that self-conscious facetiousness peculiar to attorneys when a joke is perpetrated at the expense of their profession) will be governed somewhat by the size of my retainer."

Now, although Burrows smiled, there was never a time when he had thrown over his bait in such anxiety.

"That's business," said Arthur. "We want a man who will work for money. This is an important case. You can fix the amount of the retainer with your client. Are you ready to go with me to the Grand Union hotel?"

Burrows threw on his coat and hat, all the time bracing himself as best he could—considering that his stomach was giving signs of rebellion at its long fast—with hopes that he might haul in his fish.

It is a short walk from Devonshire street to the Grand Union. Only twice did Arthur speak—once to warn the legal gentleman that it was necessary for the