

The Ne'er-Do-Well.

[Continued from page 6, Col. 4.]

through dim lit, narrow streets, gazing up at windows and balconies, harkening for the tone of a voice or the sound of a girl's laughter. But he was without the slightest success, and it was very late when he finally retired, to dream, as usual, of Chiquita.

Several days passed, and he began to feel a little dull. He was making no progress in his quest, and he did feel the lack of congenial society. Then one evening there came a note from Edith Cortlandt briefly requesting him to come and see her.

Promptly at 8 o'clock he presented himself.

"I'm a laboring man now," he said as he stood before her, "and I usually hold my cap in my hand and shuffle my feet when talking to ladies. Pray excuse my embarrassment."

She did not respond to the lightness of his tone. Her glance seemed intended to warn him that she meant to be serious.

"I suppose you are wondering why I sent for you. I've discovered who Jefferson Locke is."

"No! Who is he?" Kirk was instantly all attention. He had almost forgotten Locke.

"His real name is Frank Weller, and he is an absconder. He was a broker's clerk in St. Louis, and he made off with something like \$80,000 in cash."

"Good heavens!" said Anthony. "How did you find out?"

"A bundle of New York papers. They came today."

"Where did they catch him?"

"They haven't caught him. He has disappeared completely. That's the strange part of it. Your detective didn't die after all. But I can't understand why the police haven't discovered your whereabouts. You left New York openly under the name of Locke."

"Perhaps it was so easy they overlooked it." He smiled ruefully. "I'd hate to be arrested just now when I'm getting to be such a good conductor."

"Don't worry about that until the time comes. I'll get you the papers

later." He began to feel embarrassed. It seemed to be his fate to receive benefits at this woman's hand whether he willed it or not.

"I must go now, but first I want to make you feel how grateful I am for your kindness and for your continued trust in me. I haven't deserved it, I know, but—" He turned as if to leave, but faced her again as he heard her pronounce his name. He was surprised to see that there were tears in her eyes.

"Kirk," she said, "you're an awfully good sort, and I can't stay angry with you."

"You're tremendously good," he answered, really touched. "I can't say anything except that I'll try to be worthy of your kindness."

She gave him a half distressed look, then smiled brightly.

"We won't talk of it any more," she said. "Ever. Now do sit down and tell me what you have been doing all this time. How have you been getting along with your work?"

"All right, except one morning when I overslept."

In the days that followed he tried his very best to make good on his job. Every evening he had to himself he spent in search of the Spanish girl. Aside from his inability to find her and an occasional moment of misgiving at the thought of Frank Weller, alias Jefferson Locke, Kirk had but one worry, and that was caused by Allan. Never a day passed that the worshipful black boy did not fairly bound him with his attentions; never a night journey down into the city that Allan did not either accompany him or, failing permission to do so, follow him at a safe distance. For a time he was undecided whether to be offended at her conduct or gratified, and he had not settled the matter to his satisfaction when he called upon her that evening.

"Weeks wrote me you had squared my account with him," he said awkwardly. "I'm tremendously obliged, of course, and—I'll give this to you instead

of him." He offered her the envelope with his own inclosed.

"Don't be silly, Kirk," she said in a matter of fact tone. "I didn't wish Weeks to have any opportunity to talk. You need this money and I don't."

"Perhaps I should have offered it to Mr. Cortlandt."

"Stephen knows nothing about the Weeks affair. If you choose to regard my little favor as a debt, however, please let it run on until you are better able to pay."

But Anthony remained inflexible, and at last she accepted his proffer with some impatience.

"You are the most foolish person I ever knew," she remarked. "You have the most disappointing way of receiving favors. I had a decent position for you, but you would go to collecting fares. I hope you have had enough of it by now and are ready to take something worth while."

"Not until it comes naturally. No hop, skip and jump for mine."

Edith sighed. "It is terribly dull for me here at present," she said. "Mr. Cortlandt is very busy; I have no one to talk to, no one to amuse me. Why, I've scarcely seen you since you went to work. Will you come to the dance tomorrow night?"

He shook his head.

"The music is good. You will meet some nice people. If you remember, one of your qualifications for a position was that you are a good waltzer."

"I can't mingle with the quality."

"Be sensible. This is an invitation."

"I've learned something about canal conditions. What would people say if Mrs. Stephen Cortlandt were seen dancing with the new collector of No. 2? Besides, to tell the sordid truth, I haven't any clothes."

Edith silently extended the envelope in her hand, but he laughed.

"Perhaps I'll come to the next dance. I'll be rich then. See!" He showed her a long slip of paper consisting of five coupons, each numbered "8833."

"Lottery tickets?"

He nodded. "Allan had a very particular dream about the number 8, so I invested \$5 'silver' on his hunch. It's the number of my automobile license." Kirk sighed at the memory of his new French car. "You don't object to such gambling?"

"Hardly," laughed Edith, "when I have a ticket for the same drawing. Every one does it, you know."

"If I win the capital prize I'll come to the next party and claim all the dances you will allow me. The drawing comes off next Sunday, and it happens that I've been shifted to No. 6 for a few trips, so I'll have a chance to see the fun."

Inasmuch as No. 6 did not leave until 1 o'clock on Sunday, he had ample time in which to witness the lottery drawing, a thing he had been curious to see since he had first heard of it. This form of gambling was well recognized, it seemed; not only the natives, but all classes of canal zone workers, engaged in it freely. The drawings were conducted under rigid government supervision.

[Continued next week.]

There are times in every life when the vital forces seem to ebb. Energy gives to languor. Ambition dies. The current of the blood crawls sluggishly through the veins. It is a condition commonly described by saying, "I feel played out." For such a condition there is no medicine which will work so speedily a cure as Dr. Pierce's Golden Discovery. It contains no alcohol. It is not a mere stimulating tonic. It contains no opium, cocaine or other narcotic. It does not drug the nerves into insensibility. What it does is to supply Nature with the materials out of which she builds nerve and muscle, bone and flesh. A gain in sound flesh is one of the first results of the use of "Discovery."

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Suffer twinges, dizzy spells?
Go to bed tired—get up tired?
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Kidney trouble needs kidney treatment.
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his fare. Becoming really concerned lest he should be accused of withholding fare, Kirk spoke to Runnels about Allan, explaining fully, whereupon a watch was set, with the result that on the very next morning Allan was chased out of the railroad yards by an unfeeling man with a club. He was waiting when the train pulled in that evening, glued to the iron bars, his eyes showing as white in the gloom as his expensive grin of welcome.

For several days this procedure was repeated with variations until the dreadful threat of arrest put an end to it. Allan had conceived a wholesome respect for Spiggoty police, and for a few days thereafter Kirk was rid of him. Then one morning he reappeared as usual in one of the forward coaches and proudly, triumphantly, displayed a ticket, exclaiming: "It is of no h'avall to prevent me, boss!"

"That ticket is good only to Corozal, the first station. You'll have to get off there." But when Corozal had been passed he found Allan still comfortably ensconced in his seat.

"Now, boss, we shall have fine visits today," the negro predicted warmly, and Kirk did not have the heart to eject him.

At the other end of the line Allan repeated the process, and thereafter worked diligently to amass sufficient money to buy tickets from Panama to Corozal and from Colon to Mount Hope, relying with splendid faith upon his friend to protect him once he penetrated past the lynx eyed gateman.

Runnels accepted Kirk's explanation, and so far exceeded his authority as to make no objection. Allan, therefore, managed to spend about half his time in company with the object of his adoration.

Although the master of transportation never referred to his conversation with Kirk on the occasion of their trip through Culebra cut, he watched his new subordinate carefully, and he felt his instinctive liking for him increase. It gave Runnels pleasure to see how he attended to his work once he had settled down to it.

Accordingly, it afforded him an unpleasant surprise when he received a printed letter from a St. Louis detective agency relative to one Frank Weller, alias Jefferson Locke (last seen in New York city Nov. 25) and offering a substantial reward for information leading to his arrest. The communication reached Runnels through the usual channel, copies having been distributed to the heads of various departments. It was the description that caught his attention:

"White; age, twenty-eight years; occupation, clerk; eyes, bluish gray; hair, light, shading upon yellow; complexion, fair; height, six feet; weight, 190 pounds. No prominent scars or marks, so far as known, but very particular as to personal appearance and considered a good athlete, having been captain of U. of K. football team."

There was but one man in Runnels' department whose appearance tallied with all this. Nevertheless he held the letter on his desk and did nothing for a time except to question his new collector upon the first occasion. The result was not at all reassuring. A few days later, chancing to encounter John Weeks on his way across the isthmus, he recalled Kirk's mention of his first experience at Colon.

"Anthony? Oh, yes," wheezed the fat man. "I see you've got him at work. There's something about him I don't understand. Either he's on the level or he's got the nerve of a burglar."

"How so?"

"Well, I know he isn't what he claims to be. I have proof. He's no more Darwin K. Anthony's son than—" "Darwin K. Anthony!" exclaimed the railroad man, in amazement. "Did he claim that?"

"He did, and he"—The speaker checked himself with admirable diplomatic caution. "Say, he's taught me one thing, and that is that it doesn't pay to butt into other people's business. I played him to lose, and he won, and I got into a fine mess over it. Alfarez lost his job for arresting him."

"You'll get your money. Anthony told me he'd square up on pay day."

Weeks snorted at this. "Why, I've got it already. I've been paid. Mrs. Cortlandt sent me her check." He winked one red eye in a manner that set Runnels to thinking deeply.

CHAPTER XIII.
"8833."

FOR a few days after this conversation the master of transportation was in doubt as to what course he should pursue. In the end he did nothing, and the letter from St. Louis was permanently filed away. There were several reasons for this action. For one thing, he was a salaried man and could not afford to lose his job. What influenced him most, however, was his genuine liking for Anthony.

The first thing Kirk did when pay day came was to inclose the greater part of his salary in an envelope and send it to John Weeks, with a note explaining that he had withheld only enough for his own actual needs, and promising to continue reducing his indebtedness by a like amount monthly. He was surprised beyond measure to have the remittance promptly returned. The brief letter that accompanied it brought him a flush of discomfort. What the deuce had made Mrs. Cortlandt do that? For a time he was undecided whether to be offended at her conduct or gratified, and he had not settled the matter to his satisfaction when he called upon her that evening.

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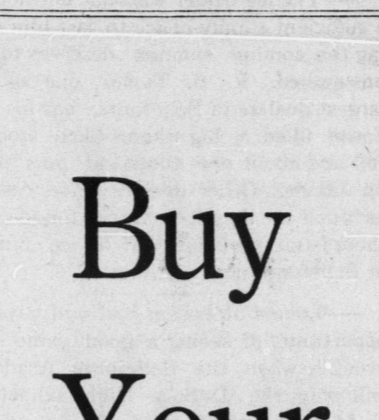
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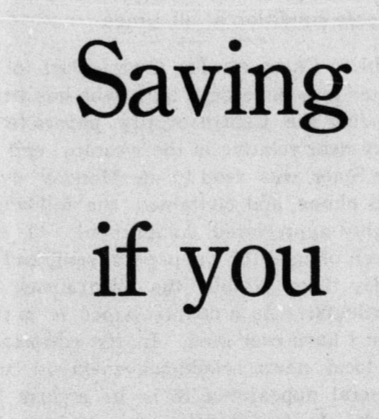
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