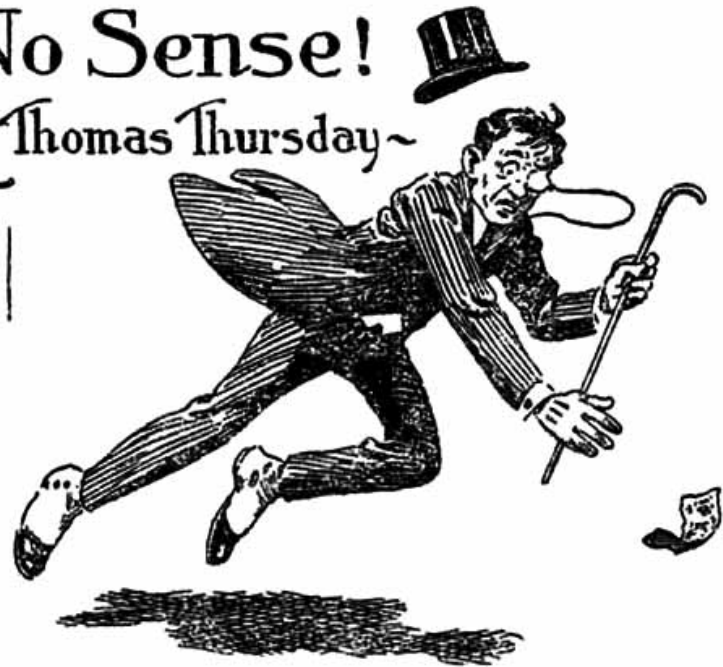


# Ten Dollars - No Sense!

By Thomas Thursday~



(COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE)

## CHAPTER I. ON HONESTY'S TRAIL.

**J**UDGING from this newspaper, Doc, you'd think that everybody in New York was either a pickpocket, blackjack bammer, or a member of the burglars' union. Looks to me as if the chief duty of a newspaper in this here town of N.Y.C. is to toss its customers assorted murders for breakfast, holdups for lunch, and divorces for dinner. And the poor yamnecks that read it wiggle their goatees, scratch their heads; and imagine that most everybody must be as crooked as a scenic railway.

"Take a slant at the news! Talk about showmanship! Why, if Pete Barnum were alive today he'd be a city editor! This stuff gives me a pain. You know blame well, Doc, that the overwhelming majority of folks are honest, decent people. For the love of Nebraska, why don't they tell what the respectable folks are doing, hey?"

You have scented, no doubt, that the above lecture was raved by no less than my pal and hotel roommate, Mr. Keen McCoy, known to the circus lots as "Everready, the Fixer." And a fixer is the bird who repairs trouble between the show folk and the natives.

We had wandered away from the Move-A-Long Circus and Side Show—I'm manager of the side show, don't forget!—and had rambled to the Burg de New York to see what it was all about. We took up headache-quarters at the Hotel Gypdorf because the rates were nice and reasonable, and because any bank president could afford to pay the rent for at least a week before robbing his vaults.

We slipped the mismanagement forty per seven days for the privilege of parking in a hall room that was big enough to make a corking nursery for a small family of canary birds who didn't mind going out into the corridor to flap their wings. But we were enjoying ourselves hugely and immensely, as they say in the society columns, and expense was no object to a couple of stone-beaned showmen who had lost their brains, and came to New York to prove it.

However, Everready was as tickled as a Maltese kitten with a feather on its whiskers, at the good times he was having and at the bad times I was positively enjoying.

At the period this show opens to the public, I was resting neatly and comfortably midst the pillows and Persian quilts of our brass-and-gold-inlaid bed, wondering how the folks were back on the road, when McCoy woke me with four ounces

of close-knit water, plumb on the chin.

"I don't care what the papers say!" I snorted. "I wouldst like to sleep. The more robberies they stick on the front page the better the boobs like it. Any flatfoot knows that. Now lemme alone!"

"Get up, you ivory-bound edition of Rip van Winkle, and we'll go out and see what sort of adventure we can fall into today. I've already got an idea that will prove to you, or any other rockhead, that my theory of honesty is correct. I repeat that the overwhelming majority of people are honest and decent."

"Well, go ahead!" I grunted. "I wanna sleep; we don't go to bed more than twice a week, and then you disturb me ten minutes later. Go out and get arrested by yourself. I'll stay here and play with the goldfish. I've already had plenty of your idea of adventure. My notion of the same is to sleep. Now lemme alone or I'll bounce that bevy of electroliers—"

"Here, read this paper for yourself," Everready interrupted, paying less attention to my remarks than if I was then touring the west coast of Denmark. "Just cast your glass eye on the news!"

I caught the paper, which same was offered via the air at full speed, and slanted the glad tidings of great gloom. Some news! I read no less than nineteen assorted murders, twenty-two scrambled robberies and the like—all done by daylight, gaslight, and moonlight. The left side of the page was devoted to the divorce fad, and ten cases of honest politicians that got caught with the goods. All of which proves my pet theory that most people are as honest as the day is long; but some don't get up till the sun goes down.

Believe me, as my one good eye raced over the news in *The Morning Flafla*, I saw at once and promptly that the world was all wrong. In the center of the page I read how a poor fish was strolling through Central Park, rehearsing a poem he had written all by himself and, while he was walking in the best of nonalcoholic spirits, up popped a bird from the shade of an old apple tree and tapped the poor poet on the bean for an infield hit and ten dollars' worth of money. Not being satisfied, the uncouth successor to Jesse James relieved the poor fish of his watch, fountain pen, and necktie. After which the poet awakened an hour later and was surprised to note that he was dressed in the same style that made Adam and Eve famous throughout the world.

The most interesting item of all, however, was about a famous prima donna. She was seated in her boudoir after the evening performance and was reading a thrilling novel about pirates. Suddenly she heard a noise in the dumbwaiter shaft. She was about to call for her maid, but happened to think that said maid was out automobiling with the cop. So the prima donna hid in the clothes basket, or something, from fright.

Then she peeked out and saw the dumbwaiter door slowly open. Well, who should pop his bean out but a bird with a high hat and tuxedo coat! He came into the apartment, lighted a cigarette to help him enjoy his work, and then tried his luck.

In the meantime, the prima donna—who was no less than the famous Yankee soprano, Madame Panama de Canall—had her heart in her mouth and was about to faint but didn't, figuring no doubt that she would probably make too much racket when she hit the floor. So she watched the high-hatted bird help himself to assorted jewelry, silverware, and whatever chanced to captivate his fancy. He then went to the dumbwaiter and escaped.

Madams reported the case to the police—who chanced to be awake that late—and, when she described the thief, they looked wise and said it was positively a bird known as "Silk-hat George," the famous international flat frisker and grade-A con man of culture. And the paper went on to say that the police told madame that she had a good chance of getting back her property. Only one thing was necessary—they would first have to grab Georgie.

"What do you think of that stuff, hey, Doc?" asked Everready as he shaved with my razor.

"Too bad!" I said. "It's a tough town. I'm getting kind of scared. This burg is no place for an honest showman. I wouldst like to amble back to the circus. I don't trust anybody around here."

"Doc, you're plumb crazy!" he fired back. "This town is O.K. and honest. Just because a few crooks get on the front page it doesn't mean that everybody is dishonest. The only difference between this town and Feverville, Ohio, is the population. Folks here are just as honest as any place. And if you wasn't born with four-fifths of the ivory supply hooked to your neck you'd—"

"How do you know they're honest, hey?" I demanded.

"I can prove it! If you'll be kind enough to refrain from further laziness, stop playing the part

of a cemetery, and get up and dress, I'll prove it pretty quick. We'll have lots of fun, too!"

"You can't prove anything to me!" I growled. "I have had all the adventure that I desire with you as chaperon. You can get a bird into more trouble than the World War. Lemme sleep!"

"The idea, my dear Doc," Everready went on, paying less attention to my remarks than if I had been snoring, "is this: I'll prove to you, or to any other moron in the world, that the vast majority of the folks in this town are fundamentally as honest as the vast majority of folks in any other city in the world. You should know that yourself. We've played about a thousand different burgs in the past five years, and you should know that, if you know anything. And I'll bet that I'm right and can prove it in a novel way. Is it a bet, old dear?"

"What's the proposition?" I inquired as I accidentally fell out of the bed.

"Listen," he continued; "you and I are to walk around this town and experiment with a ten-dollar bill. I'll walk ahead a few yards, as if I didn't know you—and Heaven knows I'm sorry I do!—and pull out of my back pocket a handkerchief. Wrapped in said hanky will be the bill. See? Bill will fall to ground. Somebody will pick up the money, and it is your duty to see who does it. You will also note that finder will return bill to me, proving his honesty, and proving that your own theory is all wet, like the Indian Ocean in a cloudburst. Well?"

"Don't you believe in prohibition?" I demanded, seeing that he was no doubt not himself.

"Sure! When does it start?" he tossed back. "But that's neither here nor there. What do you think of the bright idea?"

"Oh, fine!" I exclaimed with assorted sarcasm. "I have suspected for some time that you are troubled with a good case of epidemic encephalitis—all of which means that you are getting balmy in the bean. And I can prove it by the dictionary, if need be. Excuse me! I'm out of that party like a Republican in Georgia."

"And what is more," went on McCoy as if I had been addressing nothing more than envelopes or the air, "the proposition has all the marks of novelty and adventure. Consider the attention that a dropped ten-dollar bill will attract. Consider the finders rushing after me to return it. Consider—"

"Ah, consider Captain Kidd running a correspondence school for choir singers and be done with it!" I snapped. "You're not crazy; you're

on your way back! Any flipper who will drop a sawbuck in this here town for experiment is an insult to any first-class lunatic. Besides, I ain't gonna be no bodyguard and get done up like a silk shirt in a laundry!"

"That's the idea, Doc. So that's all settled. Now just hop into your funny-looking clothes, brush back those two hairs that nature forgot to take away with the others, and we'll go to it. Really, I actually admire myself for the idea. Come on! Hurry up!"

## CHAPTER II. NOT A CHANCE!

WITHIN the next twenty minutes I had dressed for the fool idea, and escorted Everready to the street. It was bright and early, and the sun was shining a shade better than a bootblack parlor running full speed.

"Where to, hey?" I demanded, being as pleased at the proposition as a tomcat in the middle of a lake. "I suppose you'll start the experiment in some park where a lot of birds of leisure are sunning themselves and waiting for somebody to give 'em a job on a radium-plated platter!"

"Good idea; Doc!" he agreed. "That would be a fair test. However, your remarks about the park-bench loungers are unjustified. There may be one or two who are weak-minded enough to steal my money, but I feel sure that the majority are merely unfortunate and out of employment. Suppose we go up to that park at Forty-second Street and Sixth Avenue, the one in back of the big library?"

"Kiss that ten good-by!" I said. "It's got less chance around there than the ice-cream supply at the burning of Rome."

"I'll bet another ten that my ten is safe. Is it a bet?"

"Make it fifty!" I snapped. "Make it a hundred! Make it—"

"Ten will be plenty for a while, Doc; I never take advantage of imbeciles, morons, and the like. Now come on; let's go!"

Well, we rambled up Fifth Avenue and observed the folks en route going to work—whatever that is. When we reached the public library, we made a short cut between the two stone-whiskered lions that look as funny as Chaplin, then swizzled into Bryant Park in the rear.

The benches were well supplied with flippers who were no doubt resting up after doing nothing

till they got exhausted and were waiting for the Federal Reserve Bank to fall into their laps.

“Here’s where we put my theory to the test,” said Everready. “Here you note row after row of folks who are possibly unemployed temporarily. I’ll now walk ahead about ten yards, drop the bill, and you watch.”

“In other words, you wouldst like to know who runs away with it, hey?”

“Well, perhaps somebody may steal it, Doc, but I doubt it. If such a terrible thing should happen, your duty will be to run after the person and take it away. Understand?”

“Oh, great!” I remarked. “Suppose some husky roughneck decides to grab off that ten for his own personal use, hey? Where do I stand—or fall?”

“Call for assistance, you poor flatfoot, and then I’ll come up and watch the fight. You know me, Doc!”

“I do; that’s the reason why I wouldst prefer that you perform this act by yourself. I am perfectly willing to sit in the gallery and applaud the show. If some big yapbean marries the tenner, I’m willing to be the best man—at a distance!”

“Doc, I’m afraid that you are getting old; you no longer enjoy adventure and excitement as you did on the road.”

“I’m getting wisdom, you ironhead—wisdom!” I fired back. “I have already been upholstered in too many hospitals in my day to have the performance repeated. However, I’ll take one chance, just one. Go ahead! Drop the ten; but kiss it good-by forever.”

Everready tucked a new tenner in his hip pocket and ambled down the path lined with assorted park-bench customers. Some had whiskers, some had goatees, and some had nothing but time. First noting the nearest exits in case of riots and the like, I followed McCoy at a very safe distance, because I am unnaturally cautious. In case of fire, I never try to beat my neighbor to the street. Not me! I always look around me first and choose the nearest six exits; then try to make ‘em all, if need be.

As McCoy rambled along, I began to vision at least sixty percent of the police department coming out for morning exercise in the near future. You foresee what I mean. I figured that dropping a tenner in that latitude was just as safe as doing handsprings atop the Washington Monument.

Not that I’m afraid of trouble, you know. As a matter of fact, I’m not afraid of anything that I

don’t see. But when I thought of the insurance that was paid up promptly to 1917, I began to worry about the wife and my complete set of children. Furthermore— But let’s pop into the action.

Everready walked leisurely in front of a bench that held but a single customer who looked as hardboiled as a twenty-minute egg served with a slice of leathery ham. He lay stretched out like curtains on a laundry rack and was no doubt figuring out how he came to lose his chance of being president. I saw at once that that tenner was gone—like August in September.

McCoy dropped the bill directly in front of the lazy-looking duck. I expected the same to be gobbled up like an angleworm midst a family of Chinese eels. Nothing stirring!

The bird kept on minding his business and paid less attention to the sawbuck than if it was an Ignited Cigar Store goopon. Not only that, but no less than twenty pedestrians trampled over it en route to some place. I rushed up in disgust and grabbed the jack from under the flipper’s nose.

“Hey, look what I found!” I shouted, spearing the ten at the same time.

At that the successor to Rip van Winkle yawned, stretched, and scratched his nose. “Tryin’ to kid somebody?” he asked. “If so, you’re foolin’ with the wrong chap, lemme say!” Boy, give that gentleman the iron cracker for wisdom!

“Nothing like it!” I tossed back. “I didn’t drop it; it belongs to this man coming up. See?”

“Aw, go chase yerself, yer poor boob!” replied the chap. “If I was young like I uster be, I’d be out workin’.”

Just then Everready ambled up. “Ha, I knew it!” he beamed.

“This good man found the money and returned it to you. How’s that for honesty, hey, Doc?”

“Not a chance!” I snorted. “This here baby was no doubt in Norway when you dropped the dough. Claims that he saw me drop it to kid him!”

“Then nobody wins, Doc. So we’ll call that a foul ball. Come on; let’s try again.”

“Listen,” I said, “I don’t like the looks of this park. I wouldst like to ramble down to a place called Greenwich Village. I heard a lot about it. You can try your experiment down there.”

“Good idea, Doc! Let’s go!”

CHAPTER III.  
THAT TEMPTING TEN.

WE boarded a Fifth Avenue omnibusted and climbed to the top deck. There was only one other customer up there besides ourselves, and he held down a seat in the center of the dime-taxi. He wore a cap, gold tooth, and a scar on his face.

"Try the trick on that bird," I buzzed to McCoy as the omnibusted busted along. "But kiss it farewell first!"

"Fair enough!" he whispered. After which he yanked out his handkerchief nonchalantly, and the bill fluttered to the floor. We both kept our faces to the front and awaited results. A second later I felt a tap on the shoulder. It was no less than the bird with the scarred face.

"Mister," he said, "this here ten dollars must be yourn. I saw it drop outer your pocket. Wind near carried it away."

I could have slammed that birdie for a high fly to center! I was positive that he would not disappoint me by returning the jack.

"Thanks, awfully!" Everready grinned. "You're an honest fellow." He then gave the man the up and down and appraised his shabby suit with his eagle eye. "Er—are you hard up, colonel?" he asked.

"Well, I'm not exactly busted," returned the stranger. "I still got two bits in me kick. Had thirty-five cents when I started out this mornin' lookin' for a job, but I couldn't find none, so I thought I'd blow myself to a ride to forget my troubles. Feel like a rich man up here watching all the autos breezing along."

"What would you do with ten dollars?" asked McCoy, facing the man suddenly.

"Mister, don't kid me!" replied the stranger. "Believe me, if I had a sawbuck I'd bust all records back to the wife and baby! I'll say so, mister!"

"Here, take it!" snapped McCoy. "And let's see you do it!"

Whiz! The overjoyed flipper took the money with a thousand thanks, then went down the spiral stairs ten steps at a time. Last we saw of him, he was hotfooting it for points west.

"How's that strike you, Doc?" asked Everready, jabbing me in the side.

"More luck! Happened to strike an honest man; that's all. Plain luck; that's what!"

"My dear Doc, I'm afraid that you're that unhappy mixture of liver trouble and sourness

known as a pessimist. Just because that chap was shabby it doesn't indicate that he was necessarily dishonest. In fact, that little item should prove more or less that he is honest. You know, old funnyface, that there's many a spat wearer, living at our hotel, who would have copped that ten with pleasure."

"Aw, bean soup with ketchup!" I growled. "I ain't arguing. But don't get too puffed up about people so soon in the game. You've only tried the fool experiment twice, and the day is still young. Just wait!"

The bus flat-wheeled into Mr. Washington's Square, banged into the curb, and stopped, tossing me for a yard and a half.

"Greenwich Village must be around here some place," I remarked, as I slipped down the stairs. "Let's amble down the line until we bump into some weird restaurants. I read about them in *The Squirrels' Home Companion*."

"There's a lot of millionaire authors and poets live around here, don't they, Doc?"

"That's what I hear," I said.

"Fine! We'll try the experiment on them. Maybe some famous writer will pick up the money and we'll get acquainted. I've always wanted to meet an author."

We rambled down the street until we rammed into a row of complete side shows—or whatever they were. Most of the joints were painted up like an Indian during the warpath season and had me guessing. On the left side I piped a house that looked like a cross between a Swedish hurricane and Professor Jack Dempsey. A sign is stuck over the front in nineteen-and-four-fifths colors informing the air and the world that the same was no less than "The Steamed Snowball."

Next door to it I am stunned by gazing at a mystery entitled "Den of the Batik Giraffe," whatever that is. On the next block I am knocked seasick by a complete set of mysteries, to wit, to woo: "Fall Three Steps Down," "Tavern de Yapyanker," and "The Tail of The Guinea Pig."

"Can you figure this stuff out?" I asked.

"Certainly!" replied Everready. "These birds down here are trying to be showmen, but they've got their imagination working twisted. Now a man like Barnum— Look, Doc!" he broke off suddenly. "Here come three fellows. Maybe they're famous writers. Quick—walk behind me, and I'll go ahead and drop the ten."

He trotted ahead toward the three strangers, and

I stood against a lamppost and enjoyed the sky. When he reached a few yards this side of the trio he extracted the handkerchief and let loose that tempting ten, then kept on going.

The next second a scrambled party was had by all. The tallest of the flippers, on spotting the bill, made a corking nose dive for the same. He missed it from here to Coney Island. The second bird, wearing a red face and a blue suit, tried his luck. He leaped for it like a greyhound after a bone, fell on his bean, rolled over in the gutter, and grinned. He muffed it by a block.

The third bird, who looked like a limp-leather edition of Dempsey with Carpentier binding, was the next to take a chance. Just as the wind took the tenner for a free ride down the street, the chap hurdled his two friends in a mighty jump, speared the bill; and smiled all over. I saw that the ten was positively gone. Anybody who'd fight for jack like that meant to keep it.

Wrong again! The little yapbean raced down the block after Everready, talked for a moment, then slipped him the ten. I lost once more.

#### CHAPTER IV. A DELIGHTFUL MOMENT.

I SAT me down on the curb and watched McCoy amble up with a smile on his mapperino that would have made a giggling hyena look like a row of rainy days.

"Well, Doc," he said with a grin that I wanted to tap for a high fly over the roofs, "I see that we still have the ten, eh? All of which proves my original hypothesis, the same being that the majority or folks are honest."

"I guess those birds were writers with limousine incomes!" I snapped.

"Wrong, as usual! They weren't authors; they were three famous football players. Didn't you see the way they tackled that ten? Had a little fun; that's all. Well, do I win the bet?"

"Win nothing and then less!" I snorted. "You've only tried a few times, and this here town contains more 'n five million people. Keep on trying!"

"All right, old dear; I'm willing to try it on anyone you say. Fair and square; that's me all over."

"Hey, look!" I buzzed, jumping up. "There's a bird coming down the other side of the street dressed up like a complete ballyhoo. He's wearing

a high hat, frock coat, and a pair of high-powered spats. Go over and try him."

"Watch me!" agreed McCoy, and ambled across the way.

I sat me down once more in the orchestra—right next to the lamppost—and smacked my lips in anticipation. The plutocratic-looking chap was coming full steam toward Everready and looking as important as a row of senators in front of a movie camera.

As he approached, I noted that he wore striped trousers, a cane, and about eighteen dollars' worth of well-bred whiskers. His white collar was high enough to fit a normal-necked giraffe with ease, while he held his head so straight I thought that he was no doubt nine-tenths of the army on parade. I feared at once and immediately that the tenner was as safe as hot weather in Cuba, because if that bird tried to move his bean downward he would positively crack his wishbone in assorted places.

A few yards this side of the complete haberdashery, McCoy yanked out his handkerchief and unhitched the ten. It volplaned to the sidewalk, and I awaited results.

Mr. Whiskers took one quick slant at the jack, two quicker slants at Everready's retreating back, and then—zowie!—he made a corking broad jump plumb onto the ten.

I expected him to return it to McCoy but—nothing stirring! I'll be a son of a flying yakwoof if that bird didn't put the ten in his pocket, pat his whiskers, then breeze down the street as if he was trying to pass three lampposts at a time. I was overjoyed six ways. I rushed after McCoy to tell him about the glad news with the greatest of pleasure.

"Hey, Everready!" I shouted as I raced up to him. "I wouldst like to report to your honor that your tenner is gone—like snow in July! What do you know about that, hey?"

"What!" he raved. "Is it possible? Can it be? A well-dressed man like that, a thief?"

"Ha, ha!" I sniffed. "Gimme the other ten. I win!"

"Quick, Doc!" he snapped. "Let's chase that bird. I smell a rat. I wouldn't mind if it was picked up by some poor fish that needed it, but that baby—never? Come on! Run!"

I'll say that we ran! We raced so fast that my shoes got a hot box from hitting the sidewalk. Not being as young as my roommate, I was obliged to

hook onto his coattail for a tow.

As we rounded into Washington Square, we slanted the ten-snatcher beating it across the park. He was going as fast as he could without breaking something, and making, I judge, about two knots per minute.

Everready dodged the traffic and managed to wiggle across the Avenue. As for me, I had my usual luck with New York streets, getting tangled up between a taxi, two omnibusteds, and a milk wagon. However, I succeeded in ducking between assorted wheels and escaped, suffering nothing more than a crushed hat. Dashing after my speedy pal, I reached his side just as he was making a pipping spring for the crook's shoulders.

"You're a fine piece of manhood!" I heard McCoy saying. "A man accidentally drops a little money on the street and you deliberately steal it! I have a good notion to wallop—"

"Sir!" shouted Mr. Whiskers. "What—what is the meaning of this? The idea—the very idea! Are you aware that you have maliciously attacked the Ambassador to the Court of—"

"Jesse James!" supplied McCoy. "Can the bunk and hand over that ten dollars or I'll spank you pretty!"

All the while he has the flipper by the coattail, and holding it as tight as an eel's skin. I stood to one side and enjoyed the vaudeville.

"Let me go, you common rowdy!" snorted the enraged boob. "I shan't permit you to hold me up in broad daylight and rob me of my valuables!"

Boy, give that yapbean the glass ax for nerve!

"Listen, you big fathead," I remarked—at a safe distance—"I saw you pick that tenner up myself. I'm interested because it was done on a bet; and I won! See?"

"Ah, ha!" jeered the big bird. "So you're working with this burglar, eh? So! Away with both of you! Away, I say, away!"

Bing! All of which means that the enemy started a left-hander from the main floor, let it go, and tapped me plumb on the right ear. For a delightful moment, I enjoyed a quick course in astronomy, made notes of the principal stars as they flashed by, then awoke once more to enjoy the sunlight.

Rubbing my eyes, I was glad to observe Everready letting loose one of his famous circus side-slamers, all of which arrived safely on the crook's jaw. All over! Mr. Whiskers rolled his eyes like the Great Lakes in a typhoon, wobbled his bean

like a rundown top, then made arrangements to retire for the day.

"Let's go away from here!" I said to Everready. "I wouldst be pleased to remain free from all entangling alliances, jails, and et ceteras."

"I will not! This man has my money, and I'm going to get it back if it takes .all summer."

## CHAPTER V. INCAPABLE OF PROOF.

**B**Y this time a crowd of sightseers had rushed up to enjoy the performance. A sweet lady, after taking a quick slant at the dreaming Mr. Whiskers, let forth a screech that would have meant six o'clock in any factory. As for Everready, he sat neatly upon Mr. Whiskers' massive chest and nonchalantly rolled his own. I began to feel at home myself, because the picnic reminded me of a "Hey, Rube!" on the circus lots. All that I needed to make me feel comfortable was a six-foot stake.

And then we all woke up!

A husky bird elbowed his way through the push, took a slant at the sleeping ten-grabber enjoying his nap, then shook his head knowingly.

"Well, well, well!" opened up the stranger. "If it isn't 'Silk-hat George' himself!"

I nearly collapsed! Where had I heard that name before? Brushing the cobwebs in my brain to one side, I saw a vision of *The Morning Flafla* and a certain prima donna, Madame Panama de Canall.

"Fine work, mister!" went on the detective. "The reward is all yours. How did you do it?"

"I don't know anything about any reward," tossed back McCoy; "all I know is that this bird has ten dollars of my money."

"Ha, you're not the only one!" replied the detective. After saying which he stooped over, got a strangle hold on the flat-frisker's whiskers, then gave him a complete shave with one jerk. Georgie opened his eyes, blinked, groaned, and surrendered meekly.

En route back to the hotel a while later, after a visit to the police station, Everready walked in silence.

"Hey, listen!" I snapped. "Where do I stand?"

"What do you mean?"

"I won the bet, didn't I? Then gimme my ten!"

"Doc, you're positively silly! That man was a crook, and I knew it the moment he picked up the money that I dropped."

“Knew nothing!” I snorted. “You just happened to bump into that bird by luck!”

“Maybe,” he replied with a whimsical grin. “But listen, Doc, you can’t prove that I didn’t know it was ‘Silk-hat George,’ can you?”

“But I couldn’t.”