

looked up timidly. The Mitchell brow was ridged and thoughtful.

"Hampstead," he declared with an air of grave reluctance, "I guess I'll have to lose you, after all."

"What, sir," gasped John, guilty terror shaking him somewhere inside.

At the change in John's face, Mitchell threw back his head and laughed; one of those huge, hearty, bellowing laughs at his own humor, from which he extracted so much enjoyment.

"Yes," he specified, "I am going to put you in the rate department. You have the making of a great railroad man in you. What you need now is the fundamentals. That's where you get 'em. Your brains are coming out, John. I always thought you had 'em,—but it certainly took you a long time to get any of them into the show window."

"It was seven years before you let me get to the window at all," suggested John, meaning to be a little bit vengeful.

"Nobody's fault but yours, my boy," said the G. F. A. brusquely, over his shoulder. "By the way," he remarked, turning back again, "you aren't afraid of people any more, either."

John flushed with pleasure. This was really the most desirable compliment Mitchell could bestow.

"I think I am getting a little more confidence in myself," the big man confessed, glowing modestly.

This was what three months of Kenton and "old Delsarte", as the actor called the great French apostle of intelligible anatomy, had done for John.

But Kenton and "old Delsarte" were doing something else to John that was vastly more serious, but of which Robert Mitchell received no hint until nearly a year later, when the knowledge came to him suddenly with a