

Bread and Crumbs

How an Old Saying Was Proved True and a Business Deal Arranged in Quick Time

By ED. CAHN

MOSES RABONOVITCH looked around his snug little domain with discontent written in large Hebraic letters all over his usually smiling face.

There were piles of neatly folded, secondhand clothing on the shelves, which reached the yellow-papered ceiling, and also stacked high on two counters, not to mention that in numerous drawers under them; while on wooden tiers, rather resembling miniature circus benches, were rows and rows of shoes.

There were shoes of every description, from the evening pumps of a man of fashion down to the booties of somebody's baby. They were all brushed and polished and refurnished with buttons and laces, but they all retained the foot impression of their erstwhile owners, and resentfully refused to look as good as new.

Rabonovitch had just finished oiling the floor, and now for the sixth time, perhaps, he ran his eye over the "show" in the window.

He advanced a pair of gorgeous pink-and-bronze slippers into the foreground, setting a red satin pair more to the rear. Then he changed them back again, and readjusted some new cards. "How's this for cheap?" asked one confidently, while another blandly invited, "Come in—best goods in town."

"I got to be satisfied," said Rabonovitch to himself. "Nobody could do it a better winder, or select it ketchier signs. Besides that, the goods is swell, and the store it is cleaner as anythings, and it's only ten by the clock yet. Also, it is a fine day, and that show company what busted up will maybe want it to sell their costumings to me cheap. If I don't do it a good business to-day—well, then I ain't got it no kind of a *kopf*, and don't know nothings."

IN spite of these fine musings, the look of gloom returned, and, as the ancient clock at the back of the store noisily ticked off the minutes, and no customers entered, Rabonovitch fell to pacing up and down.

"Ach! Such a slowness! A second-hand clothing business is not good for me; it's only for old mans, what like it slow lifes and slow turnovers for their mazuma. I wish it I had gone into such another somethings kind of business."

"There is Jonas Samter. He is in the jewelry business, and—by gracious!—I could easy put it his store between my counters, and then I'd have to look it out every morning that I don't sweep him out by the sidewalk along."

"But he makes it, I bet, easy hundred per cent. on everything, and has it clean goods what's new. I ain't got it so easy, or such a stylishness as he's got it."

Just then a shadow darkened the door and Aaron Solaski walked in.

"Hello, Haggarty!" said Rabonovitch. "How you iss—hay?"

"Haggarty! What for do you call me by that Irish name? Sure you know me long enough!"

"You bet your life I know you, and I thinks it there is maybe a little truth in what's this I hear about you. A party tells me you're getting ashamed for your name, and is going around now as Mr. A. Solus. Oi, oi! What is it the matter with the 'ski'? There's many a poor person what would be glad to have it a honest wind-up to their name like 'ski.'"

"Shon gutt! That's enough!" said Aaron, laughing.

"Still I ain't heard you denying nothing," persisted Rabonovitch.

"Deny! Deny! Sure I ain't denying such a bughouse talks. I got it more to do."

"Bughouse, or no bughouse, Haggarty, take it from me—I'm maybe older than you a little bit, and—"

"No, you ain't. I'm two years older as you."

"Nu, nu! I'm married now fourteen years, and got it seven childrens, and each one puts it again ten years onto me. Listen! I'm telling you somethings: A good honest name, even if it ain't got a stylish sound, is worth bread. We got it a saying—what I guess you heard it already before: 'Varf nit avek broit tzu gehn suchen breklech!' Throw not

away bread to go and seek it crumbs!"

"Now," said Aaron persuasively, "you're a friend of mine, and, even if you are always calling me down and roasting me, I will say it: I like you. I'm going to tell you just what's what, exactly, and nothing but true facts: I sold it my store for cash, and then I buys me such a mortgage in them houses what's in the long, red block on Craig Street. And I've got it just two hundred dollars cash money to go into business with."

"I been rubbering around and breaking myseif in, and I know it I shall make one grand success, and a big hit, onct I get started."

"But I needs it a office, and desk, and chairs, and also a young feller to stay it in the office to take it orders and answer the phone; and, later, some fel-

ready I had it two cases. More will come soon."

"Is that so?"

"Sure. Listen: That's why I changed my name. Also, I know every Jew what's in town, nearly. The police captain he tells me I should get it piles of private work, and, maybe—onct in a while—immigration cases, what the regular polices can't handle. He's a friend of mine, and he's going to give me a boost. He said it himself."

"Now, I want it a little more capital, and if I get it from you I make it to you better terms than what I would anybody else. You will get it fifty per cent. Always I hear you kicking that you ain't making money fast enough; but still you got it a good living here, and you hate to risk it pulling out. Give me five hundred dollars, and I'll show you how quick you'll make it more. We'll go it by a lawyer and fix it up a agreement, and every Saturday night you shall go over the books and get it your fifty per cent."

"But how do I know there will be any profits? How do I know you are such a swell detective?"

"Don't I tell it you myself? The first chanct I gets I'll show you. My goodness! Do you got to have it your fingers on the profits before you spend it a dollar?"

Just then a taxicab drew up to the door, and a gayly bedecked young woman got out. She was half over the threshold before either Rabonovitch or Solaski saw her, and was just in time to hear Rabonovitch say, in a tone of derision: "That's all right, Haggarty; but—"

Just then he looked up. "Good morning, lady. Come right in!" But she paid no heed as she stared at Solaski.

"Haggarty!" she exclaimed. "Gee whiz! Now, isn't that funny? I was just thinkin' about a fellow of the same name. He usta live here in this very burg, too. Gee! I'd give fifty dollars in real money to find him!"

"Would you, lady?" said Rabonovitch. "Well, after you transacts your business with me, tell it your troubles to this here Mr. Haggarty. He's the bestest detective in the city, and I guarantee he'll find anybody or anything, no matter where it is."

"You don't say? Well, sir, I guess I'll take your tip. You are not in a hurry, are you, Mr. Haggarty?" she said, turning to Solaski.

"Not very," he answered, ostentatiously looking at his watch.

The chauffeur was bringing in a trunk, and when it was safely settled the lady turned to the detective: "Say, I won't renig on that fifty if you can find the fellow I want. I'll tell you about him now, so that while I'm busy with this other gent you can get busy, too."

"I'M Mabel May—I guess you have heard of me. I'm the star of that burlesque show that went broke. They telegraphed me to come and save the day; it was so fierce I couldn't help it."

"This trunk's full of costumes that I want to sell 'cause I'm dated up for a new piece that calls for things entirely different. Ain't that always the way? Soon as a girl gets a thing it ain't no kind of use to her."

"My real name was Maggie Mudge, and while I was doin' a turn in the movin'-picture theatres here, four years ago, I met a feller and got married to him. His name was Oscar Plotzstein, but I used to call him Haggarty to tease him. He was a awful good kid! Gee! There wasn't a thing on the globe he wouldn't do for me."

"He was slower than a lame snail, though, and he kinda got on my nerves. He wanted me to quit the stage and live along with him in two rooms, and be poor and happy. But I wouldn't do it."

"I wanted to see my name in electric letters on Broadway, and I'm getting there fast. I kept working away, and made a hit, and got a chance to go with a pretty good road show. He let me go without a word—and, after a while, when I wrote to him and told him I wanted to get a divorce he said all right. He wouldn't stand in my light."

Here she frankly dabbed her eyes, and as frankly blew her nose.



"She was half over the threshold before either Rabonovitch or Solaski saw her."

Drawn by A. Lismer.

lers to help me when I'm busy. All them things takes it money."

"Hay!" interrupted Rabonovitch. "I ain't no money lender!"

"Who's talking about a money lender? This ain't no favour I'm asking; this is a business proposition."

"I want it a partner what puts it in five hundred dollars. He don't need it to do no work, nor nothing; all he's got to do is be a dummy partner."

"Well, I ain't no dummy, Solaski! If you ain't got it no manners no more as that, you'd better get it such a job sweeping the streets, and learn some. Calling me names! What you think I ams, anyway?"

"Don't get excited—I ain't calling you names. That word is only a expression in business. You needn't be getting into waxes. Ain't you never heard it no business talk?"

"Sure I have. But you bet I know the difference between business words and fresh words, and don't you forget it, neither. Why don't you say it at first—quiet partner—and be done?"

"Because I know it better as that. Silent partner is the word."

"That's what I said. Quiet—silent; the same thing."

"But watcha think of the proposition?" persisted Solaski.

"Fine! So crazy am I to let you use it five hundred dollars, that I'm running already now halfway to the bank to get it. But, believe me, I'd run twict as fast if you'd tell me onct what kind of a business it is."

"Sure! I ain't ashamed of it. I'm a detective already, and I'm going to open it such a office. I charge it six dollars a day for my services, and al-