

fully what they offered him that way, and felt grateful ever afterwards that Maginnis had steered him to the light.

The big man, Maginnis himself, sat on at the piano, his great fingers rambling deftly over the keys. He was playing Brahms now and doing it magnificently. He was fifteen stone, all bone and muscle, and looked thirty pounds heavier, because you imagined, mistakenly, that he carried a little fat. He was the richest man in the club, at least so far as prospects went, but he wore ready-made clothes, and one inferred, correctly, that a suit of them lasted him a long time. He looked capable of everything, but the fact was that he had done nothing. But for his money and a past consisting of thirty years of idleness, he might have been the happiest dog alive.

"The best government," said one of the three men who were not listening to the piano, "is simply the surest method for putting public opinion into power."

The sentence drifted over the player's shoulder and Brahms ended with a crash.

"Balzac said that," he cried, rising abruptly, "and said it better! But, good heavens, how you both miss the point! Why, let me tell you."

But this they stoutly declined to do. Amid laughter and protests—for the big man's hobbies were well known to the club—two of them sprang up in mock terror, and headed for the door. They indicated that they had promised each other to play billiards and dared not break the engagement.

"I could n't stay to the end, anyway, Peter," ex-