

three of the most celebrated physicians in London—he would not be so ungenerous as to name them—that without the use of this new-fangled serum the case must inevitably prove fatal.' (I said, "almost inevitably;" Bredon corrected.) 'He was thankful, however, to say that he had found courage, after a painful struggle against his own weakness—(No, no)—and the pleadings of his friends, to resist all dealings with the accursed thing, and the result, under Providence, was that with good old-fashioned nursing and treatment the child had made a splendid recovery—(Hear, hear)—whilst he had been spared the ignominy of accepting a benefit—as it turned out, a quite superfluous benefit—at the cost of some poor helpless, tortured animal. If ever they were tempted to profit by the cruelty of the scientists, and to put themselves blindly in their hands, he begged they would bear his case in mind.'

With the first sentence of the recital the alertness faded from Dr. Parradine's face, and he listened to the remainder with a sphinx-like smile. The moment it was over he jumped up and planted himself on the hearthrug with his back to the fire.

"That's a pretty bad score off one, isn't it?" said Bredon.

"Well, it does sound as if you had been rather precipitate," observed the old man, with, as I thought, less than his usual good nature. "But come and sit down and tell us all about it. You are not the man to give yourself away for nothing. We are all ears—eh?" and he turned to me with a look of intelligence, as if to bespeak my close attention.

"What do you want to hear?" asked Bredon, throwing himself rather wearily into a chair.

"Why, everything, man," cried Parradine. "What they all said and did, and how they looked. Give us the facts—all the facts. Let's have the scene as it would work out on the stage, for instance."

"Why, it was only a case of a poor little curly-haired beggar, going choking to his death, as I thought, because his father was an inflated ass."

Dr. Parradine threw up his hands despairingly.

"There! Oh, you consultants! You come dashing up to your case, turn upon it the cold, dry light of your experience—you do it to admiration, I grant—then give your verdict, pocket your fee, and drive away. To you it's a mere bald, isolated crisis—a bit of a play heard through the phonograph. Why, as often as not, you miss the whole vital interest of the thing—the human interest, that is to say. I have seen you do it, time and again. You've no dramatic instinct. You are too much wrapped up in your 'ologies. Here's a case in point—eh? Distracted parents, wringing of hearts, conflict, the very soul of drama, and you see nothing but a poor little.