

"Look at it!" panted Dick. "Look at that woman in the picture! That's what you look at! *She* aint no 'ristocrat, *she* aint!" with withering scorn. "She's no lord's wife. You may eat me, if it aint Minna—*Minna*! I'd know her anywheres, an' so'd Ben. Just ax him."

Mr. Hobbs dropped into his seat.

"I knowed it was a put-up job," he said. "I knowed it; and they done it on account o' him bein' a 'Merican!"

"Done it!" cried Dick, with disgust. "*She* done it, that's who done it. She was allers up to her tricks; an' I'll tell yer wot come to me, the minnit I saw her pictur. There was one o' them papers we saw had a letter in it that said somethin' bout her boy, an' it said he had a scar on his chin. Put them two together—her'n' that there scar! Why, that there boy o' hers aint no more a lord than I am! It's *Ben's* boy,—that little chap she hit when she let fly that plate at me."

Professor Dick Tipton had always been a sharp boy, and earning his living in the streets of a big city had made him still sharper. He had learned to keep his eyes open and his wits about him, and it must be confessed he enjoyed immensely the excitement and impatience of that moment. If little Lord Fauntleroy could only have looked into the store that morning, he would certainly have been interested, even if all the discussion and plans had been intended to decide the fate of some other boy than himself.

Mr. Hobbs was almost overwhelmed by his sense of responsibility, and Dick was all alive and full of energy. He began to write a letter to Ben, and he cut out the picture and inclosed it to him, and Mr. Hobbs wrote a letter to Cedric and one to the Earl. There were in the midst of this letter-writing when a new idea came to Dick.

"Say," he said, "the feller that give me the paper, he's a lawyer. Let's ax him what we'd better do. Lawyers knows it all."

Mr. Hobbs was immensely impressed by this suggestion and Dick's business capacity.

"That's so!" he replied. "This here calls for lawyers." And leaving the store in the care of a substitute, he struggled into his coat and marched down-town with Dick, and the two presented themselves with their romantic story in Mr. Harrison's office, much to that young man's astonishment.

If he had not been a very young lawyer, with a very enterprising mind and a great deal of spare time on his hands, he might not have been so readily interested in what they had to