

FLAGG'S FLATS

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Flagg's Flats by Jared Flagg

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JARED FLAGG

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BY
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PREFACE

IN writing this book—which explains why my real friends stand by me and have stood by me even in my darkest hours—no attempt has been made to palliate my own faults and make my side appear better, or the other side worse, than the facts justify.

It is a simple narrative relating to certain events (many of them legal in their nature), given in the order in which they occurred, without embellishments—a copy of the Court files—not so much what I say, but what the Records say. In other words, all I say, whether appertaining to social; business, police or Court matters, can be verified.

Any one can make assertions, but I have

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recorded facts, indisputable, undeniable, incontrovertible.

One fact is worth a thousand "fairy tales" and all told there have only been six hundred and forty-five "fairy tales" circulated about me; only six hundred and forty-five newspaper articles, which were highly colored and misleading.

The facts, prior to this publication, have appeared only in the Court Records. Few read the Records, few therefore are familiar with the facts in my case.

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I

IT is dangerous for a person to have an idea. There is no telling where a man with an idea may land. I once had an idea and it landed me in the Tombs.

It occurred to me that the majority of the people were honest, and if the installment furniture dealers were willing to trust their customers with ninety per cent of the face value of the goods purchased, it would be safe to trust them with the entire one hundred per cent. In other words, if it were policy to sell and deliver one hundred dollars' worth of furniture on a payment down of ten dollars, and take chances on collecting the remaining ninety in weekly payments, it would be fea-

ible to sell one hundred dollars' worth, or more, without demanding the customary ten per cent deposit prior to the delivery of the goods. The first large advance payment should be eliminated and the entire bill liquidated by small weekly payments.

This was my idea and I imparted it to Mr. Jacob Baumann, of J. & S. Baumann, furniture dealers.

At first Mr. Baumann did not seem to take kindly to it. "It had never been tried—would be risky," etc. But when a person has nothing to risk and everything to gain he can talk impressively, and I impressed upon him the profits he could make. I explained how the system in vogue tended to work a hardship, especially on young engaged couples; "it was deterring many from marrying; it was not so much the inflated installment price, as it was the large advance payment exacted at a time when it was most difficult for the purchaser to spare the money owing to the multiplicity of expenditures incidental to starting house-keeping." Therefore I maintained that the installment dealer who had the foresight to appreciate the value of my idea, and the courage to adopt it, would reap a reward.

"If you are so sanguine it can be worked without loss," said Mr. Baumann, "you advance to us the first ten per cent and we will then fill orders for any one you may introduce, provided we are satisfied with his references; and after we have collected an amount equal to the amount advanced by you, we will refund it to you; but if any of your customers skip with the goods, or return them before we have collected the first ten per cent of the bill, you will forfeit the ten per cent which you advanced to us; agree to this and we will agree to pay you a commission of ten per cent on all moneys collected from your customers."

A contract to this effect was signed, and although I may have felt a trifle ticklish in assuming a risk I had urged another to assume, on the ground that it was no risk, nevertheless I lost no time in beginning operations. An advertisement appeared in the daily papers; and those desiring to furnish homes on the installment plan, without making a payment down, were invited to call at my office.

A young gentleman called, one about to be married. He knew of a flat that suited them. The landlord would give the balance of the first month's rent free, but demanded the sec-