

LEILA'S SACRIFICE

By George Elmer Cobb.

It was "Blue Monday" for Max Wilber, with a vengeance! It was after a bright, blissful Sunday, for had he not seen Leila Marsh and passed with her one of the most delightful evenings of his life? Not that affairs were settled in that quarter, but he could not forget the bright eyes and radiant cheeks that had greeted him, nor the parting moment under the waving cherry blossoms, with the white moonlight drifting



A Bronzed, Bearded Man.

down upon that rare head of burnished gold.

Then, too, up to the hour of the opening of the bank, Max had felt something more than cheerful and happy. He was thirteen hundred dollars to the good, had a permanent position, enjoyed the confidence of the bank officers, and was led to look to a cashiership in the near future.

And then the reaction; the formal

call to the office of the stern and dignified president, who waved him to a seat and tossed a note across the glass-topped table with the single word:

"Protested."

Max turned a little pale as he scanned the bit of paper. It was a note ninety days old, signed by Simon Marsh and indorsed by himself, amount \$1,000, and pinned to it was the notation of fifteen dollars interest overdue, and one-fifth of that amount for protest fees. He was considerably perturbed, but looked up steadily with the question:

"It could not be renewed?"

"Scarcely," sententiously remarked the president, his declaration fixed and somber as the utterance of fate.

"I will pay it, then," said Max quietly, drew out his check book, calculated the gross and passed over the earnings and savings of two years.

All this was done quietly and strictly according to bank ethics, but even when Max had turned to leave the room he could feel those probing, rebuking eyes of his superior fixed upon him.

Hence "Blue Monday;" hence at the noon hour Max disregarded lunch and visited the dingy room where the man he had befriended lived. He found Simon Marsh bending over a worn satchel, trying to close its top over a bulk beyond its capacity.

"Sorry you came," he observed, straightening up, but looking embarrassed and guilty. "I was just going after that thousand dollars I owe the bank."

"You owe it to me now," advised Max, with a nervous laugh.

"Eh—how's that?"

"Well, I deceived you. When you wanted that money, and wanted it so bad, and seemed to have such glittering prospects, I hated to refuse you. I submitted your application to the directors, together with your security—a deed for that ten acres of mining land out in the Black Hills,