

### **Le Fainéant**

Truly, to the majority, our friend Fainéant needs no introduction. In fact, many of us must admit that we have, ever since childhood, been close companions of this zealous friend; but for the benefit of the "ever diligent," it will be no harm to venture a few words on the character of this popular gentleman.

A no more pleasing sort of visitor would you wish to meet. When, on a busy evening, you are head and ears in work, and know not what next to do, he drops in, with that pleasant smile of his and at once begins suggesting ways and means by which this or that section of work may be eliminated as useless, thus making the work much easier. When this is over, he thrusts his hands into his vest pockets and draws out a large list of excuses, by which he proposes to exempt you from the entire work. Being successful thus far, he sits down in contentment to spend the evening as your companion.

This is my friend's usual mood. He is ever searching for some means by which work may be made easier or eliminated altogether. He always manages to be present when any difficult task or tedious work is to be done. Only the other evening, as I was seated at my desk, wholly bent on getting through with some very difficult work, he slipped in so slyly that I scarcely knew he was present, until he drew near and began whispering in my ear such phrases as: "you'll never get through with all that work, you're not feeling well anyway," and "you're going to be sick to-morrow." Before he finished, he had me almost convinced that I had too much work, that I wasn't feeling the best, and, chances were, that I would be sick on the morrow. It happened, too, that I did remain in bed the next morning, but as yet, I can scarcely determine whether or not I was really sick.

This same popular gentleman has so many old sayings, that they make him amusing in the most trying circumstances. For example, his comments are: "There's lots of time," "Rome wasn't built in a day," and "All things come to him who waits." The old one, "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," he changes to, "Put off till to-morrow what seems too much for to-day." To the "Make hay while the sun shines," he adds, "The sun shines to-morrow."



As I said, my friend always happens along at the psychological moment. Each morning upon awaking, I find him up and already dressed. As he sees me stirring he drowsily remarks, "there's another bell." He invites me to wait for its charming sound. Not wishing to offend, I always accept. My neighbours tell me that, in this particular, they too have taken precautions never to offend him. He quite frequently comments on his popularity with the neighbours, and tries to imagine what a busy world this would be, if he were to suddenly abandon it. Of course it is no secret that not infrequently is Le Fainéant entertained by the neighbours, and, to be frank, I merely whisper that occasionally I am his host. Many of the neighbours claim, however, that they never invite him, but, like a good friend, he appears at the very moment they are involved in great difficulties. They never even suggest that the reception accorded him on previous occasions has been the cause of his continued visits. However, regardless of his motive, he is always well received. Sometimes, of course, we become bored by his presence and half wish that he would depart, yet wholly desirous of his remaining; we politely suggest it is time for his departure but at the same time entreat him to prolong his visit.

One peculiar characteristic about my friend, however, is that he possesses that supernatural gift of being in so many places at the same time. But what strikes me as being more peculiar, is that he seldom pays a visit on a holiday, except when he's dressed in his Sunday clothes, and even then he is somewhat shy about making an appearance.

This time-honored gentleman has frequently spoken of his chief pleasure, which is eating, but adds that his favorite pastime is doing nothing at all. On several occasions of late, he has complained to me of what a tedious task eating has become, and requested me to try to find some way, by which a person might live without eating. I have willingly obeyed his request, but up to the present, I have found no solution to the problem. He has also commented upon the pleasure of sleeping. He says that at no other time does he enjoy himself more, for then he is relieved of that complicated task of thinking. I am inclined to believe, then, that sleeping is the lazy man's paradise, and this reminds me of Le Fainéant's favorite refrain: "Nihil agere me delectat."—G.M., '34.