

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS OF OUR HOME STATE

ROADS LEAGUE ORGANIZED.

Better Highway Construction Aim of Corvallis Meeting.

Oregon Agricultural College, Corvallis—The Oregon Roads League has just been formed at a meeting of good roads enthusiasts held at the Oregon Agricultural college. The purposes of the league are to collect and distribute knowledge of highway construction and to be a force in the good roads movement throughout the state. Sixty enthusiasts attended the organization meeting.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Judge Victor P. Moses, of Corvallis; first vice-president, C. C. Lemmon, of Hood River; second vice-president, B. W. Short, of Klamath; secretary, E. F. Ayers, of Corvallis. Nine directors were elected: as follows: H. M. Parks, Benton; J. R. Edwards, Lincoln; B. P. Cator, Benton, for three years; C. W. LeVee, Benton; C. D. Schell, Jackson; S. W. Laythe, Harney; for two years; V. R. Allen, Marion; Harry Ebsen, Clatsop; and Phil Streib, Jr., of Multnomah, for one year.

The new league will use Town and Country, a local publication, as its official organ in pushing the good roads movement. The dues are \$1 a year, which should be sent to the secretary.

CORPORATION LAW WANTED.

Oicott Calls Attention to Many Corporations Now Defunct but Listed.

Salem—“We are accumulating some first-class evidence of the need of some kind of supervision of Oregon corporations,” says Secretary of State Oicott. He continued: “For the past two months we have been sending out notices calling attention to the delinquency of corporations in paying license fees and filing the annual reports required by law.”

“Within a week of the time that the first of these notices went out we began to receive by telephone, by postal card, memoranda on the margin of the form letters we had mailed, and in other ways, notices that ‘this corporation has been out of business for a year,’ ‘in the hands of a receiver,’ ‘bankrupt,’ ‘busted,’ ‘never organized and stockholders are scattered so that we cannot hold a meeting to dissolve,’ ‘defunct,’ and other melancholy comment in relation to corporations that were organized on wind, capitalized on hope and starved to death for want of success.”

“Within the past 30 days we have received probably not less than 100 notes and letters of the kind indicated.”

GINSENG CULTURE STARTED

Plant Said to Grow Well Near Boring and Gresham.

Production of ginseng at Boring, on the Estacada railway, and at Gresham, has been started in a small way, with the prospect that its cultivation will be enlarged. C. F. Cross, of Boring, has a considerable tract in ginseng, which, according to the reports he gives, promises to succeed well. Mr. Cross has set out 2,600 plants and has obtained results in several quarts of ginseng seeds, which commands \$6 and \$8 a quart. Mr. Cross started the cultivation of the plant as an experiment and he has succeeded so well that he will set out 500 more plants this spring. Harry Pulfer, of Gresham, also is cultivating ginseng on a lot. He has about 500 plants and probably will set out more this year.

It is said that ginseng plants when matured and well cultivated will yield seeds worth several thousands of dollars in an acre. It is known that there is great profit in the cultivation of the plant. The experiments of Mr. Cross and Mr. Pulfer will be watched with interest. Their plants are about 3 years old and it will be at least a year before they can tell how their crops will turn out.

COLLEGE ISSUES BULLETIN.

Valuable Treatise on Orchard Work to Be Had on Request.

Corvallis—The Horticultural department of the Oregon Agricultural college has just issued Bulletin No. 111, on “Orchard Management,” by C. I. Lewis, horticulturist. The pamphlet comprises 96 pages of the most interesting information obtainable on fruit raising, and is well worth studying by anyone interested in this branch of husbandry. It is furnished free to any address on request.

Albany Men Bore for Oil.

Albany—Final steps were taken at a meeting held in the rooms of the Albany Commercial club this week to form a company to bore for oil in Linn county. It is proposed to conduct thorough experiments to see if oil can be found in this part of the state. The name “Williamette Oil company” was chosen and the committee on organization was directed to prepare and file articles of incorporation at once. This committee consists of L. A. Wood, George Dorr, W. H. Marvin, E. V. Bloomfield and G. H. Crowell.

Cement Plant in View.

Dallas—At a meeting of the Commercial club here, communication from Missouri and Kansas capitalists was read, in which they gave their plan for constructing a \$750,000 one-unit cement plant in this city this year. Their proposition was that the citizens of Dallas subscribe not less than \$25,000 in stock. Experts have tested the cement deposits in this county and reported that they are good. It is proposed to incorporate the company under the name of the Oregon-Portland Cement company.

Portland to Raise Poultry.

L. L. Howe, of Portland, purchased last week a 20-acre tract located four miles east of Clackamas Station on Clear Creek. The farm is well improved and was acquired from Edward Mendenhall for \$4,000. It is Mr. Howe's intention to operate a modern poultry farm.

ONE POOR FARM IS PLAN.

Cost Would Be Less and Indigent Much Better Cared For.

Salem—To establish a central home for the aged, located in or near Salem, and do away with all poor farms and homes for indigent people throughout the state is the plan which is announced by Governor West. The governor believes that under the system which he proposes to establish the counties of the state will be saved at least one-half the expense incurred in caring for the poor and at the same time will be able to see their poor cared for in a much more humanitarian and comfortable manner.

Governor West, in the past week, has sent letters to the county judges throughout the entire state, in which he has asked personal opinions as to his scheme, as well as complete data of the expense which counties have been put to in the care of the poor.

Letters are arriving, but not enough have been received that he is able adequately to give any comprehensive idea of the approximate expense as compared to the expense under the county plan of caring for the poor.

Governor West will incorporate in his message to the next legislature a plan largely along the lines which have been outlined tentatively by him.

GOOD ROADS BODY FORMS.

Oregon League Proposes to Foster Highway Building in State.

Corvallis—The Oregon Good Roads League was organized here Wednesday. Constitution and by-laws were adopted and the following officers elected: President, Victor P. Moses, county judge of Benton county; first vice president, C. C. Lemmon, of Hood River; second vice president, B. W. Short, of Klamath Falls; secretary, Professor E. F. Ayers, Oregon Agricultural college; highway engineer, Robert Gelattly, of Benton county; directors for three-year term, J. R. Edwards, of Lincoln county, Professor H. M. Parks, of Oregon Agricultural college, and B. P. Cator, of Benton county; directors for two-year term, B. D. Schell, of Ashland, S. W. Laythe, of Harney county, and C. W. LeVee, of Corvallis; directors for one-year term, V. R. Allen, of Marion county, Harry Ebsen, of Astoria, and Phil Streib, Jr., of Portland.

The purpose of the organization is to foster good roads building in the state and to supply supervisors and others with information that may aid them in the highway improvements under their jurisdiction.

Revision Work Delayed.

Salem—It probably will be the latter part of February before the commission to revise the tax commission of the state holds another meeting. A desire to wait until after commonwealth day at Eugene may make some difference in the date, as State Tax Commissioner Galloway has been arranging plans so that the subject of taxation will be thoroughly discussed there at that time in as many of its phases as possible.

The various members, who were assigned the task of handling the details in connection with the six or seven bills, which it is probable the commission will pass on before they are sent to vote of the people, have from time to time reported that progress is being made, and it is probable that by the time the next meeting closes these bills will be well under way toward formulation, if not entirely completed and in readiness for the voters.

Water Contract Drawn.

Salem—Sideracking for a time at least, the Benham Falls project, the Central Oregon Irrigation company representatives and the Desert Land board completed a draft of a contract on the remainder of the project. That this may be only tentative, as before, however, is evidenced by the fact that neither side signed it, and then refused to do so later. This is taken as an indication that even further changes may be made. The agreement stands, barring a few minor changes, as those previously drawn.

Jetty Work to Be Pushed.

Marshfield—The Marshfield chamber of commerce has received word from Congressman Hawley that the report made by Major Morrow favors the restoration of the jetty at the entrance of Coos bay, but that the engineers at Washington say the law prevents a report and estimate being made at this time. Unless these technicalities can be overcome in some way an appropriation for the improvement of the jetty would not be available at this time.

Mr. Hawley says he has taken the matter up with the committee.

Good Roads Enthusiasts Busy.

Hood River—Hood River good roads enthusiasts are making efforts to comply with the recent good roads proclamation of Governor West, and four meetings will be held in different parts of the valley within the week. A meeting will be held at Parkdale hall in the Upper valley, to discuss the various proposed methods of road legislation. Meetings will follow at Park Grange, Pine Grove Grange and Hood River.

Marshfield Gets Busy.

Marshfield—The campaign to have the Coos Bay life-saving station changed from its present location over three miles from the bar to a more convenient place, is being pushed by the chamber of commerce and others. One petition which was generally circulated was signed by about 1,500 citizens and now another petition is being circulated only among the big mill owners, vessel owners and other large interests who are shippers.

Socialist Party Allowed Expenses.

Salem—That the Socialist party is entitled to \$200 apiece for five delegates to the national convention, to be paid by the state, is an opinion given by Deputy Attorney General Van Winkle.

WATCH MEXICO CLOSELY.

Government Keeps in Touch With Enemy Move Across Border.

Washington, D. C.—President Taft and his cabinet have turned a scrutinizing eye toward Mexico. Officials before the president seriously questioned the loyalty of General Pascual Orozco to the Mexican federal government and intimated that the present conditions in the state of Chihuahua, bordering on Texas, might develop into a movement of secession, establishing an independent republic in the North.

The president and his official family discussed precautionary measures, and the War department then sent additional orders to army posts throughout the country to be ready for a possible mobilization.

The department of justice has instructed its agents to exercise all possible vigilance in enforcing neutrality, while the State department has asked for quick reports from consular agents of any danger in the interior to Americans of their interests.

After the cabinet meeting, the president professed not to be alarmed by the situation. It was admitted in official circles that the separation of Chihuahua from the rest of Mexico would create a situation different, in many respects, from those that existed during the last rebellion.

GRAIN CANNOT BE MOVED.

Thousands of Carloads of Wheat Are Tied Up in Canada.

Duluth, Minn.—The congestion of traffic on the Canadian railroads, which resulted in sweeping reduction of freight rates to permit Canadian grain to come to the American head of the lake for elevating and storage, is more serious than at any time since its inception, according to news received here from Port Arthur, Ont.

The news tells of 3,500 cars already billed to Port William over the Canadian Northern which cannot be moved. There is no place to store grain when it arrives at Port William. Thirty million bushels are frozen on the ground or in Western elevators.

In addition, there are 1,000 cars of grain on tracks between Winnipeg and Port Arthur, making 4,500 cars on the Canadian Northern line.

The Canadian Pacific has reduced the number of empty cars that are delivered daily to elevators at the Canadian head of the lakes, on the theory that it is useless to load cars when they cannot be hauled to destinations.

SWIFTS ARE ATTACKED.

Prosecution Centers All Efforts On One Packing Company.

Chicago—The government centered its attack on Swift & Co. in the packers' trial here. John M. Chaplin, chief of the plant accounting department of that corporation, was subjected to a searching examination by District Attorney Wilkerson and required to explain to the jury many details of the complex system used by the packers.

Chaplin identified numerous letters changing the by-products allowances, which were sent by other employees. One letter signed by Chaplin and dated November 15, 1907, gave instructions to discontinue making allowances for hides in figuring the test cost of beef.

District Attorney Wilkerson pointed out that from the organization of the National Packing company, March 2, 1903, the test cost of beef, as figured by Swift & Co., steadily rose while the allowances for by-products decreased.

Cabinet Minister Prisoner. Torreon, Mex.—Abram Gonzales, minister of the interior, who went to Camargo to quell the uprising at that point, was made prisoner by the mutineers, escorted back to the railroad at Santa Rosalia and sent to Chihuahua on a handcar, according to news received here. The rebels refused to listen to his overtures. He reported his failure to the central government.

Seventy dead and wounded Salgardistas were left on the field at Chilapa after an encounter with the forces of General Ambrosio Figueroa. The losses of the federals were not given.

Lands May Be Available.

Spokane, Wash.—A plan by which 7,000,000 acres of logged-off lands in Washington, Idaho and Montana may be obtained by the government and then opened up for homestead entry is being worked out by the executive committee of the International and Empire Federation of Commercial clubs. The plan, as outlined, proposes the exchange by the Interior department of forest reserve lands for logged-off lands, on the basis of three acres of cut-over lands for one acre of forest at all costs.

Distracted, not knowing what course to pursue, she paced the floor of the room. Through the closed door she could hear the music and the chatter of her guests. She must go to see Underwood at once, that was certain, and her visit must be a secret one. There was already enough talk.

If her enemies could hear of her visiting him alone in his apartments that would be the end.

“Yes—I must see him at once. Tomorrow is Sunday. He's sure to be home in the evening. He mentions Monday morning. There will still be time. I'll go and see him to-morrow.”

“Allicia! Allicia!”

The door opened and Mr. Jeffrey's put his head in.

“What are you doing here, my dear?” he asked. “I was looking everywhere for you. Judge Brewster wishes to say good-night.”

“I was fixing my hair, that's all,” replied Allicia with perfect composure.



SYNOPSIS.

Howard Jeffrey, banker's son, under the evil influence of Robert Underwood, a fellow-student at Yale, leads a life of dissipation, marries the daughter of a gambler who died in prison, and is disowned by his father. He tries to get work and fails. A former college chum makes a business proposition to Howard which requires \$200 cash, and Howard is broke. Robert Underwood, who had been repulsed by Howard's wife, and Howard is broke, takes Howard to his home, and had once been engaged to Allicia, Howard's stepmother, has apartments at the Astruria, and is apparently in prosperous circumstances. She remains unpaid, and decides to ask him for the \$200 he needs. Underwood, taking advantage of his intimacy with Mrs. Jeffrey, Sr., becomes a sort of social highwayman. Discovering his true character, she breaks the news to Allicia. Underwood's absence from a function causes comment among Mrs. Jeffrey's guests.

CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

“In a word,” laughed the judge, “you mean that all you are trained to read my mind can tell just what's passing in my brain?”

“Precisely,” replied the doctor with a smile. “The psychologist can tell with almost mathematical accuracy just how your mental mechanism is working. I admit it sounds uncanny, but it can be proved. In fact, it has been proved, time and time again.”

Allicia came up and took the doctor's arm.

“Oh, Dr. Bernstein,” she protested. “I can't allow the judge to monopolize you in this way. Come with me. I want to introduce you to a most charming woman who is dying to meet you. She is perfectly crazy on psychology.”

“Don't introduce me to her,” laughed the judge. “I see enough crazy people in the law courts.”

Dr. Bernstein smiled and followed his hostess. Judge Brewster turned to chat with the banker. From the distant music room came the sound of a piano and a beautiful soprano voice.

The rooms were now crowded and newcomers were arriving each minute. Servants passed in and out serving lead delicacies and champagne.

Suddenly the butler entered the salon and, quietly approaching Allicia, handed her a letter. In a low tone he said:

“This letter has just come, m'm. The messenger said it was very important and I should deliver it at once.”

Allicia turned pale. She instantly recognized the handwriting. It was from Robert Underwood. Was not her last message enough? How dare he address her again and at such a time? Retiring to an inner room, she tore open the envelope and read as follows:

Dear Mrs. Jeffrey: This is the last time I shall ever bore you with my letters. You have forbidden me to see you again. Practically you have sentenced me to a living death, but as I prefer death shall not be partial, but full and complete oblivion. I take it as a means of letting you know that unless you revoke your cruel sentence of banishment, I shall make an end of it all. I shall be found dead, Monday morning, and you will know who is responsible.

Yours devotedly,
ROBERT UNDERWOOD.

An angry exclamation escaped Allicia's lips, and crushing the note up in her hand, she bit her lips till the blood came. It was just as she feared. The man was desperate. He was not to be got rid of so easily. How dare he—how dare he? The coward—think that she could be frightened by such a threat. What did she care if he killed himself? It would be good enough, suppose he did carry out his threat? There would be no terrible scandal, an investigation, people would talk, her name would be mentioned. No—no—that must be prevented at all costs.

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CHAPTER V.

Among the many huge caravansaries that of recent years have sprung up in New York to provide luxurious quarters regardless of cost for those who can afford to pay for the best, none could rival the Astruria in size and magnificence. Occupying an entire block in the very heart of the residential district, it took precedence over all the other apartment hotels of the metropolis as the biggest and most splendidly appointed hostelry of its kind in the world. It was, indeed, a small city in itself. It was not necessary for its fortunate tenants to leave it unless they were so minded. Everything for their comfort and pleasure was to be had without taking the trouble to go out of doors. On the ground floor were shops of all kinds, which catered only to the Astruria's patrons. There were also on the premises a bank, a broker's office, a hairdresser, and a postal tele-

The THIRD DEGREE

A NARRATIVE OF METROPOLITAN LIFE

By CHARLES KLEIN AND ARTHUR HORNBLow

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

graph office. A special feature was the garden court, containing over 30,000 square feet of open space, and tastefully laid out with palms and flowers. Here fountains splashed and an orchestra played while the patrons lounged on comfortable rattan chairs or gossiped with their friends. Up on the sixteenth floor was the cool roof garden, an exquisite bower of palms and roses artificially painted by a famous French artist, with its recherche restaurant, its picturesque tziganes, and its superb view of all Manhattan island.

The Astruria was the last word in expensive apartment hotel building. Architects declared that it was as far as modern lavishness and extravagance could go. Its interior arrangements were in keeping with its external splendor. Its apartments were of noble dimensions, richly decorated, and equipped with every device, new and old, that modern science and builders' ingenuity could suggest. That the rents were on a scale with the grandeur of the establishment goes without saying. Only long purses could stand the strain. It was a favorite headquarters for Westerners who had “struck it rich,” wealthy bachelors, and successful actors and opera singers who loved the limelight on and off the stage.

Sunday evening was usually exceedingly quiet at the Astruria. Most of the tenants were out of town over the week-end, and as the restaurant and roof garden were only slimly patronized, the elevators ran less frequently, making less chatter and bustle in corridors and stairways. Stillness reigned

Then came the answer. The boy looked up.

“He says you should go up. Apartment 155. Take the elevator.”

In his luxurious appointed rooms on the fourteenth floor, Robert Underwood sat before the fire puffing nervously at a strong cigar. All around him was a litter of objets d'art, such as would have filled the heart of any connoisseur with joy. Oil paintings in heavy gilt frames, of every period and school, Rembrandt's, Cypri, Ruysdael's, Reynoldses, Corots, Hennessys, some on easels, some resting on the floor; handsome French bronzes, dainty china on Japanese teakwood tables, antique furniture, gold embroidered clerical vestments, hand-painted screens, costly oriental rugs, rare ceramics—all were confusedly jumbled together. On a grand piano in a corner of the room stood two tall cloisonne vases of almost inestimable value. On a desk close by were piled miniatures and rare ivories. The walls were covered with tapestries, armor, and trophies of arms. More like a museum than a sitting room, it was the home of a man who made a business of art or made of art a business.

Underwood stared moodily at the glowing logs in the open chimney-piece. His face was pale and determined. After coming in from the restaurant he had changed his tuxedo for the more comfortable house coat. Nothing called him away that particular Sunday evening, and he was one likely to disturb him. Ferris

started at what he saw there. It was the face of a man not yet 30, but apparently much older. The features were drawn and haggard, and his dark hair was plentifully streaked with gray. He looked like a man who had lived two lives in one. To-night his face frightened him. His eyes had a fixed stare like those of a man he had once seen in a madhouse. He wondered if men looked like that when they were about to be executed. Was not his own hour close at hand? He wondered why the clock was so noisy; it seemed to him that the ticks were louder than usual. He started suddenly and looked around fearfully. He thought he had heard a sound outside. He shuddered as he glared toward the little drawer on the right-hand side of his desk, in which he knew there was a loaded revolver.

If Allicia would only relent escape might yet be possible. If he did not hear from her it must be for to-night. One slight little pressure on the trigger and all would be over.

Suddenly the bell of the telephone connecting the apartment with the main hall downstairs rang violently. Interrupted thus abruptly in the midst of his reflections, Underwood jumped forward, startled. His nerves were so unstrung that he was ever apprehensive of danger. With a tremulous hand, he took hold of the receiver and placed it to his ear. As he listened, his already pallid face turned whiter and the lines about his mouth tightened. He hesitated a moment before replying. Then, with an effort, he said:

“Send him up.”

Dropping the receiver, he began to walk nervously up and down the room. The crisis had come sooner than he expected—exposure was at hand. This man Bennington was the manager of the firm of dealers whose goods he disposed of. He could not make restitution. Prosecution was inevitable. Disgrace and prison would follow. He could not stand it; he would rather kill himself. Trouble was very close at hand, that was certain. How could he get out of it? Pacing the floor, he bit his lips till the blood came.

There was a sharp ring at the front door. Underwood opened it. As he recognized his visitor on the threshold, he exclaimed:

“Why, Bennington, this is a surprise!”

The manager entered awkwardly. He had the constrained air of a man who has come on an unpleasant errand, but wants to be as amiable as the circumstances will permit.

“You didn't expect me, did you?” he began.

Shutting the front door, Underwood led the way back into the sitting room, and making an effort to control his nerves, said:

“Sit down, won't you?”

But Mr. Bennington merely bowed stiffly. It was evident that he did not wish his call to be mistaken for a social visit.

“I haven't time, thank you. To be frank, my mission is rather a delicate one, Mr. Underwood.”

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



“Yes, I Must See Him at Once.”

everywhere as if the sobering influence of the Sabbath had invaded even this exclusive domain of the unholy rich. The uniformed attendants, having nothing to do, yawned lazily in the deserted halls. Some even indulged in surreptitious naps in corners, confident that they would not be disturbed. Callers were so rare that when some one did enter from the street, he was looked upon with suspicion.

It was shortly after seven o'clock the day following Mrs. Jeffrey's reception when a man came in by the main entrance from Broadway, and approaching one of the hall boys, inquired for Mr. Robert Underwood.

The boy gave his interlocutor an impudent stare. There was something about the caller's dress and manner which told him instinctively that he was not dealing with a visitor whom he must treat respectfully. No one divines a man's or woman's social status quicker or more unerringly than a servant. The attendant saw at once that the man did not belong to the class which paid social visits to tenants in the Astruria. He was rather seedy looking, his collar was not immaculate, his boots were thick and clumsy, his clothes cheap and ill-fitting.

“Is Mr. Underwood in?” he demanded.

“Not home,” replied the attendant insolently, after a pause. Like most hall boys, he took a savage pleasure in saying that the tenants were out.

The caller looked annoyed.

“He must be in,” he said with a frown. “I have an appointment with him.”

This was not strictly true, but the bluff had the desired effect.

“Got an appointment? Why didn't you say so at once?”

Reaching lazily over the telephone switchboard, and without rising from his seat, he asked surlily:

“What's the name?”

“Mr. Bennington.”

The boy took the transmitter and spoke into it.

his man servant, had taken his usual Sunday off and would not return until midnight. The apartment was still as the grave. It was so high above the street that not a sound reached up from the noisy Broadway below. Underwood liked the quiet so that he could think, and he was thinking hard.

On the flat desk at his elbow stood a dainty dem-tasse of black coffee—untasted. There were glasses and decanters of whiskey and cordial, but the stimulants did not tempt him.

He wondered if Allicia would ignore his letter or if she would come to him. Surely she could not be so heartless as to throw him over at such a moment.

It was in the office of one of the big theaters. A lot of actors were bringing around a couple of journalists and a secretary or two. A young woman dropped in for a hasty greeting, and then paused a moment to speak to a very well-known actor whom she evidently met for the first time. The press agent's desk was open, and in a corner sat a package of pictures of the celebrated actor. The latter looked them over, and as the young woman exclaimed that he should give her one he said, with an insinuating smile to the press agent:

“Alas, they are not mine. They belong to Mr. Dash!”

“I can't give any away,” said the latter. “Each one costs me 20 cents.”

“Surely that is cheap!” the young lady suggested.

The press agent ignored her and turned to the actor.

“Cheap? Do you think anybody would pay that much for you?”

And the young lady laughed and went without her picture.

Cost of Living Increasing. The price of diamonds has been increased ten per cent. It appears impossible for the poor man to get in on the ground floor anymore.

moment. Crushed in his left hand was a copy of the New York Herald containing an elaborate account of the brilliant reception and musicale given the previous evening at her home. With an exclamation of impatience he rose from his seat, threw the paper from him, and began to pace the floor.

“Was this the end of everything? Had he reached the end of his rope? He must pay the reckoning, if not today, to-morrow. As his eyes wandered around the room and he took mental inventory of each costly object, he experienced a sudden shock as he recalled the things that were missing. How could he explain their absence? The art dealers were already suspicious. They were not to be put off any longer with excuses.

Any moment they might insist either on the immediate return of their property or on payment in full. He was in the position to do neither. The articles had been sold and the money lost gambling. Curse the luck! Everything had gone against him of late. The dealers would begin criminal proceedings, disgrace and prison stripes would follow. There was no way out of it. He had no one to whom he could turn in this crisis.

And now even Allicia had deserted him. This was the last straw. While he was still able to boast of the friendship and patronage of the aristocratic Mrs. Howard Jeffrey he could still hold his head high in the world. No one would dare question his integrity, but now she had abandoned him to his fate, people would talk. There was no use keeping up a hopeless fight—suicide was the only way out!

He stopped in front of a mirror, started at what he saw there. It was the face of a man not yet 30, but apparently much older. The features were drawn and haggard, and his dark hair was plentifully streaked with gray. He looked like a man who had lived two lives in one. To-night his face frightened him. His eyes had a fixed stare like those of a man he had once seen in a madhouse. He wondered if men looked like that when they were about to be executed. Was not his own hour close at hand? He wondered why the clock was so noisy; it seemed to him that the ticks were louder than usual. He started suddenly and looked around fearfully. He thought he had heard a sound outside. He shuddered as he glared toward the little drawer on the right-hand side of his desk, in which he knew there was a loaded revolver.

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