

He was an editor of magazines. There have been editors in the past, I know ; but Costin and his kind resemble the leisurely, consequential persons who constructed the periodicals of a generation ago as an aeroplane resembles that quaint contraption of wooden-framed wings covered with bed-sheets with which a trusting monk of old once flew from the roof of his monastery to the paved courtyard below.

It was one of Costin's boasts that no other supereditor in the world read more manuscripts in the course of a year than he read, rejected more than he rejected, and yet accepted so many. Figured out, it seems queer ; and yet it was probably true. He dictated scores of letters every day. It was child's play to him. He shaped the lives of men even as he shaped the products of their brains. Crops of fiction were sown at his suggestion and ripened to his taste in far-flung corners of the world.

He plucked Captain Hamilton out of India and established him on Long Island with a typewriter and a motor-car ; and the captain was only one of dozens whose habitations and affairs were affected by Costin's thirst for fiction. In his spare time he went fishing, ran over to Europe and back, and wrote histories.

Precisely at eleven o'clock of a certain June morning Costin finished dictating to Miss Featherstonhaugh the twenty-third and last of a batch of letters. After this brisk bit of work,