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HELIOTROPE

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It went hard with me not to remind Gregory that I had discouraged the taking up of the case in the first place. It wasn't our sort of case at all. I had said, "If we don't look out, Gregory, people will begin to call us private detectives". Then we had both laughed and I had given in, as I usually do when my senior partner insists.

Gregory does not like me to call him "my senior partner" because our standing in the firm of Gregory and Hubbard is supposed to be equal, but I believe that when any two men are associated one of them naturally takes the lead, and Gregory happens to be that one. I don't mind. My position as chief of staff is quite as necessary as his. Indeed, the whole idea of our partnership has been that two heads are better than one, especially when the heads are utterly different. No one person, save a superman perhaps, can combine minute and painstaking observation with

that instinctive, almost inspirational, selection of the essential which is the essence of all really useful detective work. A partnership is necessary, and it seems that my head combines beautifully, however useless it may be on its own. Gregory is quick and far-seeing, a born reasoner and a fine logician. I am a looker-on who sees most of the game. From boyhood I have been conscious of a power of minute observation which has helped me in some ways and hindered me in others. As a newspaper man, for instance, I always saw too much. I never seemed to learn what not to see. The news editor wore out his vocabulary and his blue pencil in vain; and then one day an unexpurgated report slipped through, and I slipped out of newspaperdom for good and all!

It was just at this time that Gregory, too, suffered a reverse of fortune which gave him a fellow feeling for other misfits and resulted in our embarking upon our present partnership for the study of those problems which