

gation grew impatient. The gallery in spots sat down. The effect of the prayer was in total no more than a dismal thickening of the gloom of tragedy that hung lower and lower over the meeting. Yet once the prayer was ended, Elder Burbeck baldly declared the object of the meeting.

His manner was strained, his voice was harsh and halting, but he began stubbornly and plodded forward doggedly, gradually laboring himself into the hectic fervor of his assumed position as the instrument of God to purge All People's of its pastor.

Yet it was in keeping with the tenseness of the situation that as the emotions of the vehement apostle of the *status quo* reached their height, his words became rather less florid, and he concluded in sentences of sycophantic calm and tones of solicitous consideration for the feelings of the piece of riff-raff he was about to brush aside with a sweep of his fiery fan.

"There is before us," he assured his audience finally, "no question of the pastor's guilt or innocence of the charges made. The question is one of expediency; as to what is best to do for the good name and the future usefulness of All People's. The Board of Elders, after serious and prayerful consideration," Brother Burbeck's voice whined a little as he said this, "has felt that it was best for the pastor and best for the interest of the church to ask him to resign quietly and immediately. That request has been emphatically declined. It has become our duty, painful as it is," the Elder sighed and twitched his red neck regretfully in his white collar, "to present to the congregation a resolution covering the situation. That resolution the clerk of the church will now read."

But instead of looking at the clerk, the chairman looked at Elder Brooks.