

The Man and the Hour

II

ing for him. He always travelled in specials, and they always waited for him. In fact, everything waited for him, and he waited for no one. When he engaged a taxi he never discharged it until he went to bed or left the town. It was related of him that on one occasion he had directed the taxi to wait for him at Charing Cross Station, and returning from Paris three days later had allowed his old friend, the cabby, who knew him well, a shilling an hour as a *pourboire*. He claimed that his mind worked smoothly as long as it could run ahead without waits, but that as soon as it had to halt for anything—a cab, a train, or a slower mind to catch up—it got from under his control and it took hours to get it back again.

To him money was only to be spent. He would say: "I spend money because that calls for no mental effort, and saving is not worth the trouble that it requires."

A big husky chap, thirty-four years old, with the constitution of an ox, the mind of a superman, the simplicity of a child: that was John Fulton Edestone. He insisted that his discovery was an accident that might have befallen anyone, and counted as nothing the years of endless experiments and the millions of dollars he had spent in bringing it to perfection. He was a dreamer,