

Gilbert threw back his shoulders quickly at the last announcement.

"That's impossible," he said firmly, although his voice trembled. "Mr. Hardy——"

A hand on his arm interrupted him, and he turned to look squarely in the face of Samuel Hardy himself, pale, emaciated, crouched back in an invalid's chair. "The old man" grinned up at him weakly, and their hands met and clasped.

"It's all right, Jack. We had the directors' meeting in my house, and it was unanimous."

The crowd on the lawn had not heard a word, but a deafening din of applause arose as they saw the two men meet, and the people beyond, who could not even see, took up the shout good-humoredly. Gilbert's eyes, glancing beyond Mr. Hardy, saw his mother turn away suddenly as if to hide something of which she was ashamed, and he caught a glimpse beyond her of a mass of waving black hair and black eyes beneath, wet with tears. Then someone came in between and he faced the lawn once more.

Gilshannon, his cynicism changed temporarily to merry egotism,—the simplest transformation for cynics,—appeared on the steps after a conference with the men at the front, and handed Gilbert a heavy seal ring from the men, "a magic ring that gives you power over a thousand men and more, men you're proud to have back of you, sir, and men who're proud you want them." And with the ring in an envelope, was Gilbert's union card. Gilshannon had been editor of the *News* since the day after election, and he was as popular as ever. The people