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Looking West Prince Rupert.

"Well—that's a mighty choice vanilla," he admitted.

"Just as choice as Rex," sighed Johnson. "I tell you, Jim, what with this sort of thing, and spirit burglaries, and so on, the business isn't what it used to be."

"Ah, about the vanishing extract," said Walling, glancing about to make sure that they were alone. "See here, Tom. Did you ever suspect Scovill of having a hand in that?"

"Scovill? No-nonsence!" "I don't know that it's altogether nonsence," muttered the junior partner

"But it is-on the face of it. Why, suppose that the fellow was a professional crook, he couldn't get the extract out with him. He always passes through the office, and he never carries so much as a bundle. Any way, he's as straight as a string, Jim."

"Are you sure of that?" "He had the best kind of recommendations from that firm in Chicago."

"I know that," said Walling with a peculiar smile. "Tom, have you ever met Rob Jergensen?"

"Never heard of him." "He's the generad manager of that Chicago house. I used to know him out in Cleveland, and I ran across him yesterday in the Astor House and lunched with him."

"Well?" "Well--" laughed Walling. 'I happened to speak of Richard Scovill, and how satisfactory we had found him, and Jergensen thought I was crazy.

"Because Richard Scovill has been back in his old position with the Chicago house for nearly eight months!" "With the Chicago house!"

"Precisely. Furthermore, Jergensen informed me that Scovill hadn't been outside of Chicago for five years. He started upon his own hook when he left them, and failed—and then went back to his old job."

"Walling!" "And still further, the Chicago Scovill lost a wallet containing his letters of recommendation about a year ago." "Well, by George!" said Johnson. "Then Scovill isn't Scovill—is that the

"That's the idea. Our Scovill is somebody who found the original Scovill's letters and knew the business of making extracts. Probably he has excellent reasons for not possessing his own letters of recommendation. Hence, knowing where the real Scovill stood in our line, he came here and got the job. Are you sure of him now?"

"I can't see that he has had any chance to steal our extracts-to save my life I can't."

"No more can I," sighed Walling, See here, I'm going up to the roof by | hind the laboratory radiator!"

way of the feed-store next door. It strikes me that it is about time for more stuff to disappear.'

Walling found his hat and hurried down the street. Later on he might have been seen to slip into the feedstore. Still later one might have met him on the roof of the Johnson & Walling building.

Scovill had not been out of the place more than five minutes when the junior partner entered once more, beaming triumphantly.

"Tom, I've got it!" he cried.
"What! The mystery—" "It's all clear as a bell!"

"What is it? What is it?" "Nay, nay," smiled Walling. "I won't tell you now. Wait until morning and you'll have ocular demonstration. More stuff is due to disappear about nine o'clock to-morrow morning, take my word for it. Scovill left rather early, didn't he?"

"Yes; I noticed that."

"I happened to slip on the roof, and the noise scared him away. Be here to-morrow by half-past six, Tom. Good-night!"

"Say!" called Johnson wonderingly. But Walling had departed, whistling. Several things occurred next morning.

Walling arrived first of all accompanied by two policemen. His partner hurried in several minutes later, and stared hard at the officers.

"It's all right, Tom," laughed Walling. "I thought we might need a bit of an audience for the demonstration. But now for the mystery. This little affair is best reasoned out backwardfrom effect to cause. You'll see why presently. In the first place, how did those extracts leave the building? Well, our man Brady carried them out in broad daylight!'

"Old Brady, the truck-driver?"
"The same. Yesterday I noticed that

he had two casks on his truck that I couldn't account for. I watched him, and he smuggled up a third one—from the cellar. That settles one point."

"But how on earth did they get down

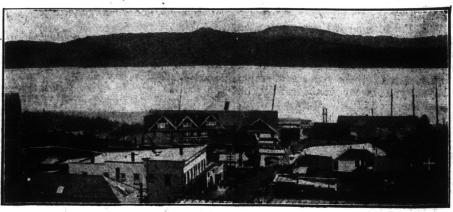
cellar and into casks?" "Come down and I'll show you. One of the officers will accompany us.'

They stumbled down the dark stairway. Walling lit the gas and led the way across to the big heating furnace, now long cold.

"You may remember that our hose disappeared two or three weeks ago?" he said, opening the furnace door and groping around inside. "Well, there's one end of it!"

He dragged out the brass nozzle of a garden hose and a yard or so of the rubber tubing.

"There! That forty-foot hose is simply hanging down the heating shaft," he announced. "The other end "but he's had something to do with it. is secured to a hook up-stairs, just be-



Main Street, Prince Rupert.