

## The City of Numbered Days

to be one of the greatest of the modern salvages of the waste places, Brouillard had been assuring himself that his work was large enough to fill all his horizons. But the detonating crash reminded him forcibly that the presence of the touring party was asserting itself as a disturbing element and that the incident of its discovery the night before had been dividing time pretty equally with his verification of the locating engineer's blue-print mappings and field-notes.

This was the first thought, and it was pointedly irritating. But the rebound flung him quickly over into the field of the common humanities. The explosion was too heavy to figure as a gunshot; and, besides, it was the closed season for game. Therefore, it must have been an accident of some sort—possibly the blowing up of the automobile. Brouillard had once seen the gasoline tank of a motor-car take fire and go up like a pyrotechnic set piece in a sham battle.

Between this and a hurried weighting of the sheaf of blue-prints with his field-glass preparatory to a first-aid dash down the outlet gorge, there was no appreciable interval. But the humane impulse doubled back upon itself tumultuously when he came to his outlook halting place of the night before.