

Mr Hickman passed a nervous corded hand over his stiff moustache.

'I'm glad you called my attention to this, Liscard,' he said, 'it wants looking into. The thing's a crying need. Everybody *says* so. Nobody *does* anything. Here we go on talking about it, writing about it if you like, making any amount of journalistic capital out of it, and when somebody actually gets down to work as this Doctor has done, I believe, at Finlay, we let him and his work fall through for want of encouragement. Isn't that about the shape of it, Miss Dunn?'

Sandra's breath came and went spasmodically.

'Say!' she breathed, 'but you know—!'

'I should,' he returned, 'I've been thinking of the West and working for the West, whether my opponents allow that or not, through the best part of a pretty strenuous life, and I know what a man's up against when he sets his hand to public work out here. Give that Doctor of yours at Finlay my very best compliments, and tell him the best of a cropper like this, of a thoroughly bad disillusionment, of a failure and a breakdown is that it enables you to begin all over again with a safe, because sufficiently poor, estimate of what other people, are going to do to second you! Oh, you needn't tell me. I've been through all that, and more, and have still managed to accomplish something. What he's got to do, tell him, is to hew the line straight, let the chips fall how they may.