



The Alternative

constantly whetted by signs of achievement that met him, no matter which way he looked in contemplation of his new environment. To his surprise and gratification — and also to his consternation — society was not ready to drop him. As a matter of fact, he was more sought after than ever. Most of his time as secretary to Mr. Krosson was spent in declining the invitations that poured in upon him from admiring hostesses who, far from disdaining him, frankly intimated that they liked him the better for the step he had taken. Old Mrs. Beeker, society's leader, halted him in Fifth Avenue the day before Christmas and leaned from her carriage window to tell him that she was proud of him.

"Women despise idlers and dawdlers, my dear boy," she said. "Make something of yourself. If you should happen to get a wife, beat her occasionally."

His personal effects had been removed to less conspicuous rooms in Seventy-seventh Street. He was at home there every evening.

"I wonder if this will last," he said to himself more than once in those first days.

He was off to Princeton on the noon train, more pleasantly excited than he had been in many a day. He had asked Mr. Krosson if his services were necessary at the office on Christmas day.

"If not, I think I will run down to Princeton to spend the holiday with friends."

"I thought you were going to drop out of society, Bosworth," said the capitalist, putting his hand on the young man's shoulder.