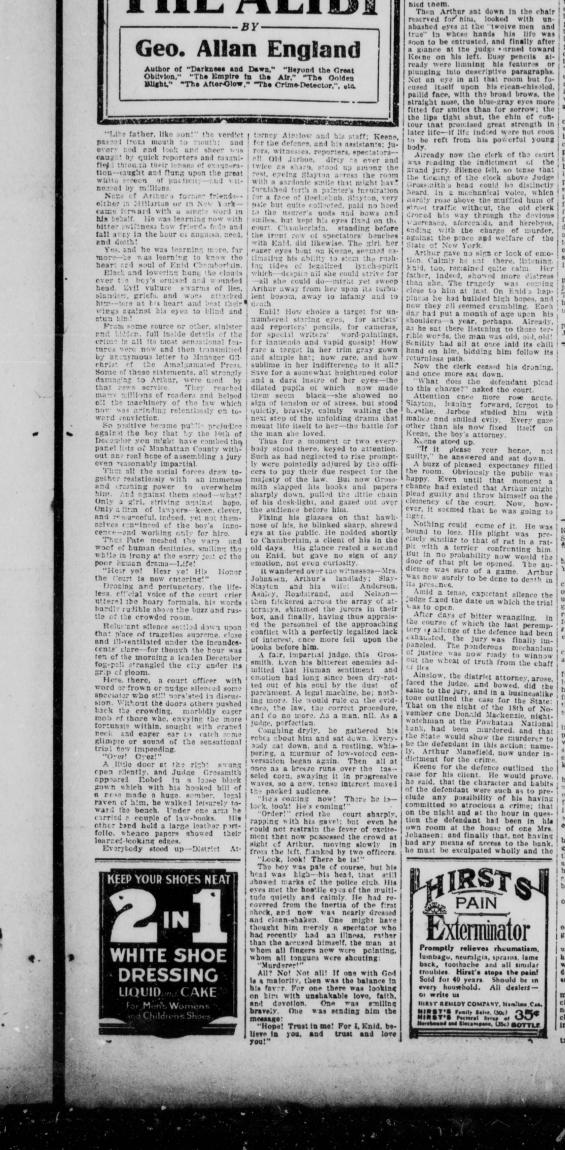
SMOKE-TUCKETTS

THEALIBI

Geo. Allan England



Her eyes and his met for a moment in a message that thrilled them both. A little smile came to his lips. He nodded at her, and she smiled, too. Even there under the shade we of death that ray of sunshine could not be denied them.

Then Arthur ant down in the chair reserved for him, looked with unabashed eyes at the 'twelve men and true" in whose hands his life was soon to be entrusted, and finally after a gance at the judge arried toward Keene on his left. Busy pencils aiready were limning his features or plunging into descriptive paragraphs. Not an eye in all that room but focused itself upon his clean-chissled, pailid face, with the broad brows, the straight nose, the blue-gray eyes more fitted for smiles than for sorrow; the the lips tight shut, the chin of contour that promised great strength in later life—if life indeed were not soon to be reft from his powerful young body.

Aiready now the clerk of the ceurt was reading the indictment of the



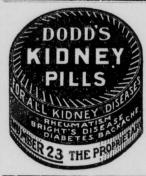
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He sat down, leaving a decided impression of weakness in his case. Against the centicent air of the district attorney, and the positive manner in which Ainslow had engaged to prove the tacts as alleged by the state, Keene's argument seemed tuitle in its impotence. Ainslow smilled to himself and cast an appraising eye at the jury as he cnee more arcose.

"Your honor and gentlemen of the jury," said he, "in proof of the facts alleged in the indictment against this defendant, the State will now proceed to the introduction of tostimony to show motive for the crime—the fact of a theft by the defendant of the sum of twelve hundred and fifty dollars from the bank in question, and the strong probability of the theft of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; the fact that the defendant was possessed of a pistol on the night of the murder, and that he showed signs of exhaustion and disorder in the morning. The State will also prove that the crimes in the bank were positively committed by an employee of that institution, and that the defendant when accused assaulted the corones and the consulting physician."

Ainslow next engaged to produce certain material exhibits, viz.: The weapon with which the murder had been done and the bullet that had caused the victim's death. Bullet and pistol would both be identified as having belonged to the defendant. Also, he would produce the tool that had been broken in opening a desk to get possession of the combination of the safe—this tool, furthermore, belonging to the defendant. Also, a glove, dabbled with the old man's blood, said glove belonging to the defendant. Also a could produce the tool that had been broken in opening a desk to get possession of the combination of the safe—this tool, furthermore, belonging to the defendant also a could produce the tool that had been broken in opening a desk to get possession of the combination of the safe—this tool, furthermore, belonging to the defendant and been broken in opening a desk to get



Keene's address the usurer had caught Slayton's guilty eye, seeking his face with involuntary dread.
How did Jarboe manage to convey his message? Who could have told? Yet Slayton understood it.
Was it a certain look in those crafty, narrow eyes? Was it the smile of malice? Was it the seemingly casual manner in which the old man fingered his scanty gray hair—hair that renninded Slayton of the six gray hairs found in the dead hand of Mackenzie? Was it all those or something else?



Thin Endy Hair or Thickand Healthy?

A scalp cared for by Cuticura usually means thick, glossy hair. Frequent shampoos with Cuticura Soap are ex-cellent. Precede shampoos by touches of Cuticura Ointment to spots of dandruff, itching and irritation of the scalp. Nothing better for the complexion, hair or skin.

ally. "I don't believe a man totally innocent can be convicted of a crime. I'm innocent. Absolutely innocent! I won't perjure myself even to save my lite!"

Yeene appealed to Enid to get her help in making Arthur change his mind, but all in vain. She tock exactly the same ground as he. 'a,o argument could shake eitner of them. This decision, Keene felt, could have none but a fatal outcome. The testimony of the State was developing terrible strength. Nowhere could the slightest loophole be discovered.

Ainslow first put Anderson, janitor of the bank, on the stand. Anderson told how be had found the body, notified the authorities, and later discovered the pistol behind some asn barrefs in the basement. Nothing of value to the defence was elicited by Keene's cross-examination.

Coroner Roadstrand followed. Under Ainslow's skilled direct examination he narrated his verdict, described the condition of the body, told of Arthur's incriminating appearance on reaching the bank, gave an account of the preliminary medical examination as conducted by himself with Dr. Nelson's assistant in the directors room. His testimony impressed the jury deeply; it stood firm against all Keene's actacks.

Slayton, nervous, but highly intelligent, gave a coherent narrative. It was noticed that he appeared greatly worn by emotion, and that not once during his testimony did he look at the prisoner. This was favorably commented on as proof of his affection for Mansfield and of his grief at being forced to testify against the boy. A certain well-marked hesitation at times further substantiated this unwillingness.

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Twice during his story he was seen to peer at a certain eccentric old money-lender named Jarboe, who sat near oy, nooding and emiling, with a few gray hairs twidding in his gnarled fingers. At these times Slayton appeared to suffer acutely. Only a few persons noted the incidents, and these may have interpreted them to mean that Jarboe was urging him on to testify even more strongly against the boy, which Slayton was obviously unwilling to do.

Slayton's story drove still another nail into Arthur's coffin. His direct testimony about the boy's theft of twelve hundred and fifty dollars, and few new details and some trivial contradictions. Ever since the marder Slayton had been drilling himself in this story and schooling himself on all its manutiae. Now he was able to make it carry with the ring of truth.

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No telling: but, at any rate, the cashier shuddered, paled, and turned away in mortal dread.

He knew now, he understood to the fall, that everything lay in that Shylock's crooked hands. He comprehended that a word from Jarboe might rece Arthur and seat him. Slayton, in the chair of death. All, absolutely everything depended on Jarboe.

Would the usarer keep faith? Having received the blood-money and the promise of those horrible payments, which meant to Slayton a life of slavery and continued theft that could end enly in disaster, would Jarboe keep faith?

Slayton's heart turned sick within him. He arose, made his way to the water-cooler, and drank greedity; then once more he sat down, mopping his forehead, wet with the sweat of so intense an anguish that no human safforing, it seemed to him, could equal it.

Thus, racked by agony and terror, he watched the opening act of the great drama of life and death. Arthur, the accused, sat calm and brave been spoken, writhed in torment. And so now the actual battle of life, of death, began.

CHAPTER XVII.

Henderson, Keene's assistant, leaned over to his chief and urgently begged a chance of piea.

"For heaven's sake, Keene, whispered, "have Mansfield withdraw his 'not guilty' and substitute 'guilty' with a piea for clemency! If he doesn't, they'll send him to the chair sure as guns!"

Keene nodded approval, pondered amovent, and then conferred with his client. He too, now believed that in no other way could Arthur eceaps the chair. But the boy unhesitatingly and indignantly repelled the suggestion.

"Till either stand or fall on the truth," he whispered back emphatic-number of suprementations and the promise of the promis