

THE CAUSE OF IT ALL 5

in my suit case, which I sent down to the station."

"Another 'Courier' assignment?"

"Yes. In the morning the 'Courier' will announce that 'in accordance with its well-known policy of giving the public complete and reliable information on all affairs of importance, it has despatched a special correspondent to Texas to investigate the land frauds.'"

"And you're the man because you know something of the law on the subject, eh?"

Another nod and a lazy puffing at the cigar.

"Phil, how much longer is that close-fisted old uncle of yours going to keep you doing stunts on a newspaper?"

Elmore blew a ring of smoke toward the ceiling.

"Don't malign my kin, Jack, just because the dear man insists that I must prove myself to have mettle if I am to be his heir. The stipulation was that I was to secure a place on a reputable newspaper and 'make good.' If I can hold the place for a year, he says he'll think I am fit for something besides following a pack of fox-hounds."

Morden nodded. "And you are rather fond of the hounds, I believe."