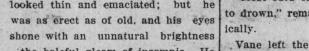


He was very white, there were black shadows under his eyes, and he

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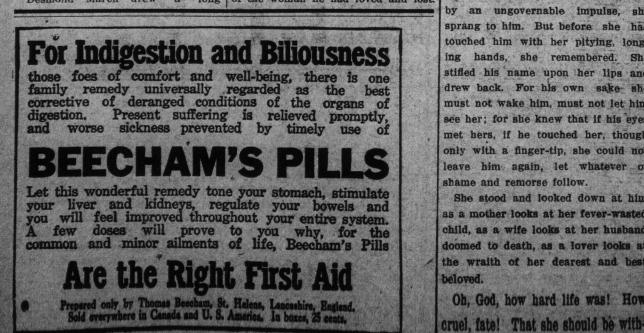


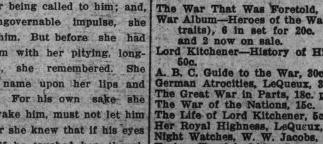
nodded to the men, and, going to a corner, lit a cigar and took up a newspaper. They let him alone for a time, then Mortimer crossed the room to him and asked him to play: and Vane looking up at him as if awaking from a dream, rose and went to the table. Strangely enough, he usually won, and his luck was still with him this evening; but he seemed scarcely conscious of his good fortune, and played with phlegmatic, stolid calm and impassive countenance

man entered the room from a door behind them, and, ordering a drink of the footman, glanced at the players. Two or three of Vane's party looked up at the man and then at Vane; for the newcomer was Desmond March He appeared to be in excellent spirits: was carefully dressed, as usual, and sauntered across the room with his peculiar debonair and graceful gait. As he reached the table at which Vane was playing, he paused, nodded to the other men, and, regarding Vane with a cordial smile, behind which, however, lurked the suggestion of a sneer, said:

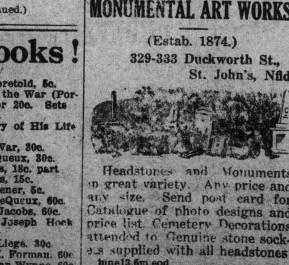
"How d'ye do, Dalesford?"

The men held their breath, and and gazed moodily at the lights on stared before them expectantly, but the river. He was looking at one of Vane raised his eyes for a moment; the most beautiful and marvelous then, as if he had neither heard the sights in the world, but he was blind greeting nor seen the man, he return- to its marvel and its beauty, for he ed to his cards and went on playing. was seeing, dimly, vaguely, the face

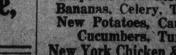




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