

To an Englishman indifference to gold appears an amiable eccentricity; to an American as a mental obliquity which passeth understanding. Marshall Gault was one of the most prominent personages in the Great Republic.

The *Avenger* building, almost southernmost of the skyscrapers, and overshadowed to the north by loftier buildings, was a structure of steel, faced with marble, that rose sixteen storeys above the pavement. Close beside it on the right was the dark, squat, ten-storey block of Dr. Rex Clewston's Frailty Investigation Bureau, in which Colonel Giggleswick claimed to have been an officer.

Mr. Gault's sub-basement was an engine-room; the basement contained the *Avenger's* printing works; the rooms about the vestibule were devoted to business management; twelve storeys were sublet; on the upper floors were the offices of the editorial staff; and the roof supported a little park, where the employes could refresh themselves with the sea-breeze, lager beer, and cutlets. A broad cornice projected from above the fifteenth floor, where, between the windows of Gault's office, stood plaster statues of Justice, Mercy, Faith, Hope, Love, all in an advanced stage of decay. These windows commanded a magnificent prospect, for beneath them, far on the left, the tongue of Manhattan Island tapered away down to the Battery, and beyond was the bay, all glittering under the noon sun, where the sails of schooners hung dark against the blue, and the smoke of liners drifted along the breeze, where the fishing-smacks dodged in the track of the ferries, and the yachts fluttered their ample jibs in the wind's eye; where launches dashed about cursing the helpless barges, and pilot-boats raced seaward in search of the home-coming ships.