

tangular glass box, listening without comment by the hour and abruptly making up his slow-moving mind. Deryk and his mother bathed and played at Atlantic City, when New York became too hot for them; but Lancing refused to follow them until his new project was in train. When he came, it was to bid them accompany him for a six month's cruise in the Pacific. The work was unfinished, hardly begun, but he had been picked up unconscious from the floor of his private office, where he sat ostentatiously with the door open, to shew New York that he was accessible; his doctor told him that he was suffering from nervous strain. For a time the right side of his face was puckered, and he could not speak distinctly. Then his control returned, but the memory of the sudden surrender of brain, the puckered mouth, the stiffness down one side of his body frightened him, and he was a tractable patient.

At the end of the six months he returned to New York and reported formally to the doctor, who declined to pronounce him fit for work and ordered a further rest. Lancing, slowly deciding that all was not well with him, called in a specialist and had himself re-examined. This time there was no loose talk about nervous strain; he was told that, in the sense of the word understood in New York, he would never be able to work again.

"A. L. is a back-number," he said to himself, as he drove to his office; he repeated the words mechanically, as he set about furtively destroying a number of papers dealing with undertakings which he would never finish. The phrase had sprung from a forgotten pocket of his memory, and he used it dispassionately and without rancour, though he could have wished for any other tag to come and relieve duty. "I am going to take another holiday, Gwen," he announced that night in the same even tone, though he looked deliberately round the drawing-room on Riverside Drive rather than at his wife, who would now see him only in his degradation. "It will last as long as I do," he went on. "The fool doctor says I may travel and pick up cups