

Fortunately the worst stages come first, and I have been feeling the after effects for some days already."

Lamison looked at my confusion with amusement.

"Tell Robertson about it all, old man," he said. "He is perfectly trustworthy, and yours is such an interesting story. To begin with, tell him how old you are."

Gage laughed, a quick boyish chuckle, and sprang up gaily, stretching himself before the sparkling fire. "Just three and twenty," he answered hilariously.

I looked at him carefully. His iron-grey hair, the infinitesimal tracery of lines that covered his face and hands like a fine-spun web, and the slight stiffness of his joints, in spite of his quick and rather graceful movements, bespoke a man in the later fifties. I understood now. He was doubtless one of the curious cases of mania which the doctor was constantly picking up and studying.

"Tell him how it happened," Lamison suggested.

Gage's face grew grave. "It's very sad, part of it—but on the whole I have been blest above all men, for I have lived my life twice over. It was this way"—he sat down once more in the easy chair from which he had risen. "I was devotedly fond of my wife—one of the most charming women in the world, Mr. Robertson; but I lost her. She died, very suddenly, under singularly painful circumstances." His mouth twitched, but he controlled himself. "I was away on business in Washington when the news of her sudden illness reached me. I waited for nothing but left by the next train. I remember giving ten dollars to the driver of the cab I hailed on my arrival, if he would reach my house in ten minutes. Aside from that the journey is only a blur of stain and horror. My memory becomes clear again with the moment when I saw my doorstep, wet and shining in the rain. I noted the reflected carriage lamp on the streaming pavement. The servant who opened the door at the sound of the stopping of my cab was crying. The house was brilliantly lit and I could hear hurried footsteps on the floor above and catch a glimpse of the blue-clad figure of a trained nurse. I rushed upstairs and into my wife's room. She raised one hand feebly toward me, and a flash of recognition lit up her face for an instant and then faded into waxy blankness. I can't describe that hour—it is too keenly terrible for me to repeat and it is not necessary to the story. At last it was all over, and her dear eyes closed forever, as I thought then. A great emptiness settled upon my brain and heart. Then came a slow tightening and straining sensation somewhere inside the dome of my skull, that seemed as fast as St. Peter's. A snap, sharp as a broken banjo string and perfectly audible was its climax. Then I steadied myself and looked about. Nothing had changed. The room was still, for the others had gone and we were left alone together—my wife and I. The silence was awful. Only the clock ticked louder and louder and louder till it beat like a drum. Then I glanced at the timepiece, an ordinary little porcelain thing that my wife kept by her on the medicine table, and a cold fear gripped me as I looked, for I realized that something wonderful and terrible was happening. With each tick the second hand jerked one second backwards—the hands were moving around the clock from right to left. I started, and almost at the same instant I felt the hand I held in mine grow relaxed and warm. I gave a cry. The door opened. The nurse, who had been the last to leave the chamber of death, came in. I saw her do exactly what she had done before—but reversed. Then my sister backed in from the opposite side, exactly as she had walked out, and turning, showed me her tear-stained, convulsive face with the very movement with which she had left us. The others came in; it was a strange phenomenon. The doctor was there now, standing at the head of the bed. I looked at the clock. It was ticking and the hands slowly turning backward.

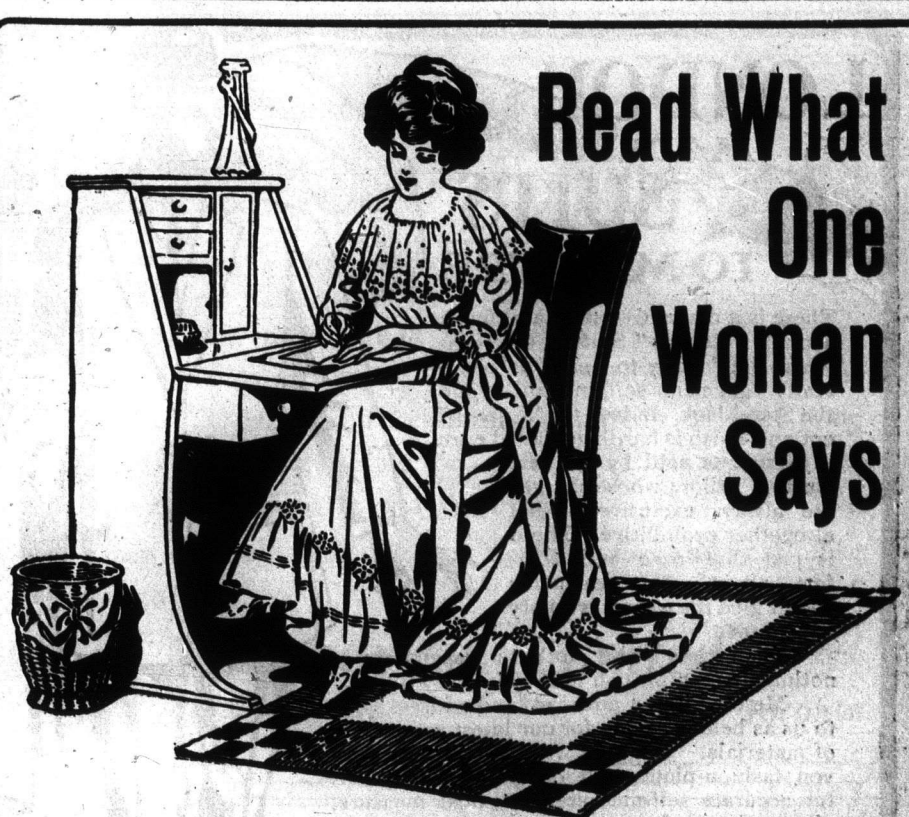
All at once I realized what had happened. Time had turned.

"I gasped when the thing dawned on me, it was so stupendous. But I saw my sweet wife's eyelids flutter, I saw her breath coming with difficulty, and I suffered once more with all my soul that terrible death agony. She turned toward me and lifted her hand with the gesture I had seen as I entered the room. In spite of myself I rose, and left her. I went down the stairs—the servant was there—I passed out into the street, to find the cab that had brought me standing before the door. I backed in. The horse trotted backward all the way to the station and I found myself on the train speeding backward to the city I had left to come post haste to my darling's bedside.

"My reason shivered in my skull. If I could not sift this matter I knew I should go mad. The thing was strange past all endurance. So I sat in the train that was carrying me over the miles so recently covered, and considered. A dawn of delight came to me. It would not be so long before all this horror would have doubly passed. I would have to go to the hotel and receive that terrifying, crushing telegram announcing Isabelle's illness once more. Then I should go over the business that had called me on to Washington, but after that I should go back to my wife to find her strong and well, to live over again the happy years of our married life, to watch her growing daily younger, while I grew young with her. What matter that little tiff re-occurred—they were so few, and the joy of those years so infinitely great. And that, Mr. Robertson, is just what happened."

He went on, after a pause, in which he seemed lost in happy reverie. "In a week I had grown somewhat accustomed to doing over again the things I had done, only reversed; it seemed almost a matter of course; and, after all, I cared little, for I knew I was soon going to find Isabelle, to be greeted by her good-bye kiss, the same with which she had bid me Godspeed on the fatal journey. I could hardly hold my impatience as, at last, I backed up to the house, and when I saw her standing on the porch as I had last seen her, well and strong, dressed in the pretty gray cloth so becoming to her bright complexion and copper-colored hair, I could have cried with joy. She greeted me as I expected, with good-byes, but my heart sank with delight as we went into the house together. I put down my dress-suit case, and we ate luncheon together, beginning with dessert and ending with the delicate omelette she had prepared herself, in honor of my unusual freedom to lunch with her. We went over our old conversations. I was longing to tell her of my delight in her presence, of my gratitude for the extraordinary reversal of nature that gave her back to me, but I could not, I was under bondage of the past. I could only say what I had said, do what I had done.

"Luncheon over—or rather, correctly speaking, before it had begun—I bade her good-bye in my heart, but greeted her in my speech and went down to the treadmill round of my office work. My recent bereavement made me so tender of her presence, so hungry for the sight of her, that my very soul longed to expand itself in loving words and acts; I yearned to do and say a thousand affectionate things, but I could only do as I had done. I began to appreciate how I had let our relations become commonplace, and I hated myself for it. I saw a thousand ways in which I could have made her happier, or spared her pain, yet I could not take advantage of my new realization of my love of her. Ah, it takes such an experience as mine to make a man understand what he has missed and what he might have been. But even if I could not be to her what I so dearly longed to show myself, yet in my heart no gesture of hers went unnoted, no tone of her voice unloved. She delighted me wholly and completely, and the caresses that I gave her in seeming perfunctoriness, and the words seemingly mere habits of expression, were really the outlet of my



Read What One Woman Says

DIAMOND DYES Will Make Old Dresses Look Like New
DIAMOND DYES Will Freshen Up Carpets and Rugs

"I can hardly tell you how helpful Diamond Dyes are to us. When I was a little girl, my mother always used Diamond Dyes. She used to say, 'Never throw away anything until you are sure that Diamond Dyes won't save it,' and, considering my father's salary, we had the brightest house and the newest looking clothes in our neighborhood."

"Since I have been married I have held fast to Diamond Dyes, and they have helped me keep my children and my home looking nice at almost no expense."

"I have done hundreds of things suggested by your valuable DIAMOND DYE Annual, and I am so enthusiastic that I always show my friends my new things, and read them the helpful hints in the Annual. Lots of them have Diamond Dyes and my suggestions to thank for their pretty new clothes."

—MRS. HENRY MALCOLM, Toronto.

DIAMOND DYES
Will Do the Same For You

Faded hosiery, silk gloves, veils and feathers can be made like new with their use.

Portieres, couch covers, table covers, ribbons, sashes and trimmings of all kinds are given new life and added beauty.

And for dyeing dress goods, faded garments, skirts, waists and suits, Diamond Dyes are invaluable, both in economy and usefulness.

There is no other dye made that will do the work of Diamond Dyes. There is no other dye that you can use with absolute safety to the material.

You Take No Risks with DIAMOND DYES

You can use Diamond Dyes and be sure of the results. You can use them with safety on the most expensive piece of goods, and there is no danger of the goods becoming spotted or streaked or harmed in any way.

Diamond Dyes are "The Standard of the World," and the only dyes perfect in formula, positive in action, certain in result.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE USE OF DYES

Diamond Dyes are the Standard of the world, and always give perfect results. You must be sure that you get the real Diamond Dyes and the kind of Diamond Dyes adapted to the article you intend to dye.

Beware of imitations of Diamond Dyes. Imitators who make only one kind of dye, claim that their imitations will color Wool, Silk or Cotton ("all fabrics") equally well. This claim is false because no dye that will give the finest results on Wool, Silk or other animal fibres, can be used successfully for dyeing Cotton, Linen or other vegetable fibres. For this reason we make two kinds of Diamond Dyes, namely Diamond Dyes for Wool, and Diamond Dyes for Cotton.

Diamond Dyes for Wool should not be used for coloring Cotton, Linen, or Mixed Goods, as they are especially adapted for Wool, Silk, or other animal fibres, which take up the dye quickly.

Diamond Dyes for Cotton are especially adapted for Cotton, Linen, or other vegetable fibres, which take up the dye slowly.

"Mixed Goods," also known as "Union Goods," are made chiefly of either Cotton, Linen, or other vegetable fibres. For this reason our Diamond Dyes for Cotton are the best dyes made for these goods.

Diamond Dye Annual—Free Send us your name and address (be sure to mention your dealer's name and tell us whether he sells Diamond Dyes) and we will send you a copy of the famous Diamond Dye Annual, a copy of the Direction Book and samples of dyed cloth, all FREE. Address

THE WELLS & RICHARDSON CO., LIMITED
200 Mountain Street, Montreal, P. Q.