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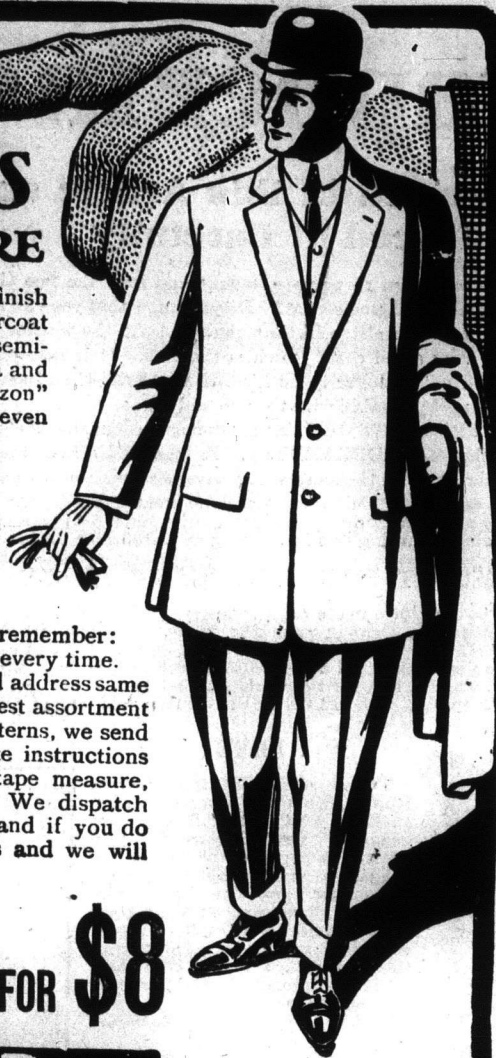
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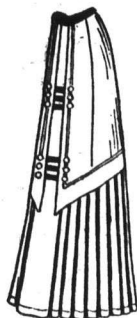
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man, and that meant £2 10s. a week. Now £2 10s., considered purely from the financial view-point, meant that the necessity of Hopkins' return to his millions was more remote than ever. But, strangely enough, the same £2 10s. made Hopkins consider such a step very gravely, because to him it meant—

Well, it meant that he and the girl went for a very long walk that evening. "But you love me, don't you?" said Hopkins, stubbornly staring down at the pavement.

"Yes, Jimmy," she answered gently, slipping her hand into his. "And that's why."

"We could live on it, couldn't we? Besides, I've saved some, you know."

"I know, dear. We could live on it But—"

"You mean your mother," said Hopkins, nodding.

"Yes, Jimmy."

"We could spare enough for that, too," he persisted.

"But that wouldn't be fair to you," she said, shaking her head earnestly. "It would take almost all, you know."

The hypocritical vision of J. Graham

in a moment, but he wanted to see it through as it had begun, for this was to him the only real thing in his life.

But he resolved that it would not be long, for now he slaved and planned. The girl planned too, but her plans were not his. He did not tell her this, for his plans were to come as the glorious surprise, as the great reward for all the toil and courage and sacrifice. She talked of the little home until to her it became almost a visible thing. It would be a gay, cheerful, comfortable little place. Perhaps her mother could come, too. Hopkins would listen and nod his head and smile. What a wonderful little optimist she was!

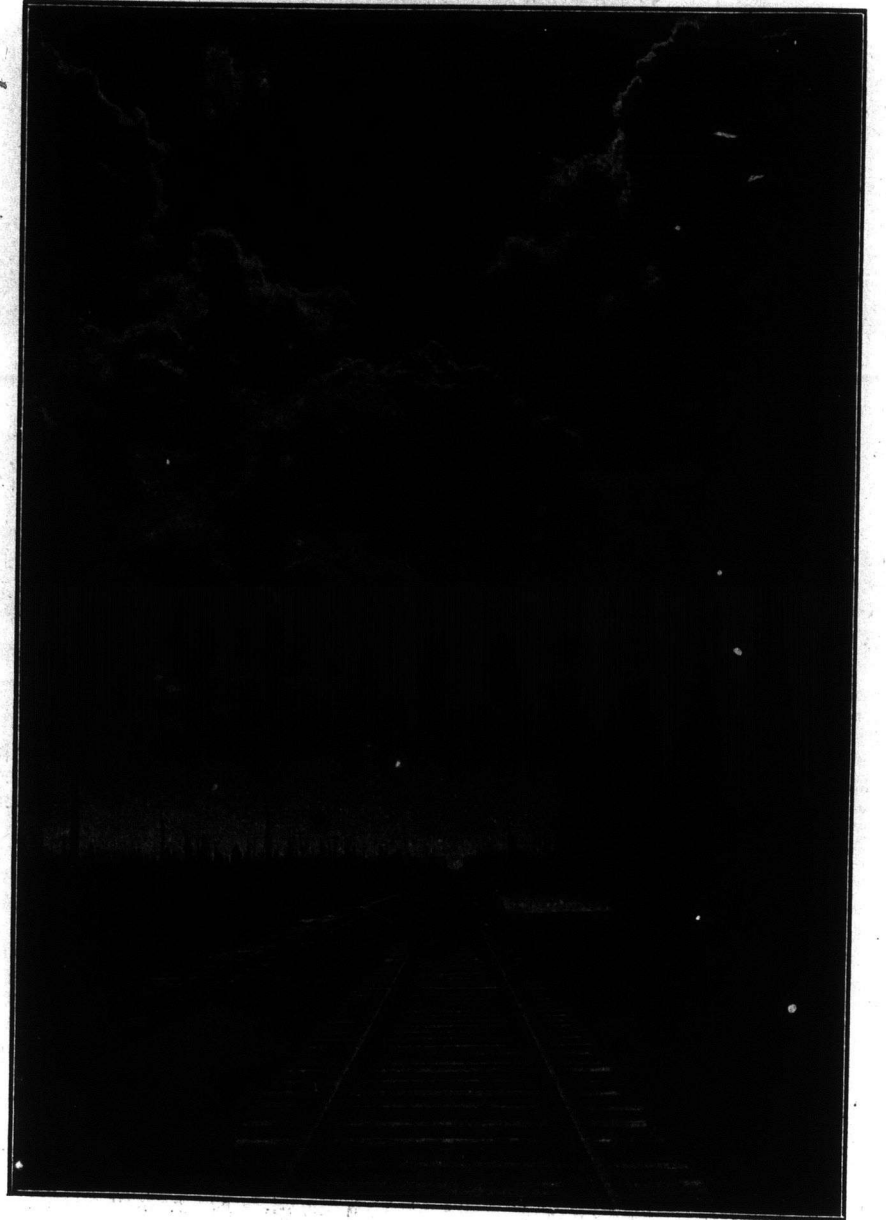
And then came the day of release. The manager called him into the inner office.

"Hopkins," he said, "here is a cheque covering commissions on your sales for the past month."

Hopkins took it and looked at it rather stupidly.

"I didn't know I was on commissions yet," he said.

"Well, you are," said the manager,



Cloud effect at Baden, north of Swan River.

Hopkins flitted before his eyes, but he would not yield to the taunt.

"But I'm getting along pretty well," he said. "Some day I'll get more; I'm sure of that. The manager said something about commissions if I did well."

The girl looked dreamily at the monotonous row of brick houses along the road. "We must wait for them," she said, almost inaudibly.

"We will, dear," he answered, shutting his jaw resolutely.

It was from that day that Hopkins began to reckon on the time when he would return to his riches. For they were not all his now; part of them belonged to the little girl with the brown eyes. When she was his wife he intended to pour them into her lap in a golden shower. But he had won her as plain Jimmy Hopkins, and as Jimmy Hopkins he wanted to marry her. He was earning his way in business, and he wanted to earn his wife. Then, and not until then, would he put the glitter of the big world before her. It seemed hard, perhaps, to watch her struggling on in the crowd, when he might lift her out of it

turning to his desk to show that the matter was dismissed.

Hopkins was not thinking of the cheque as he walked out of the office. He was thinking about getting married. He quivered with an exultation that he did not know how to express. As plain Jimmy Hopkins he had won the game!

He began the journey homeward in a sort of dream. Now and then he thrust his hand into his pocket to see if the cheque was really there. He was trying to decide just how he would tell her—whether he would show her the magic slip of paper and let her guess what it meant, or whether he would run into her presence shouting and waving his hat. He entered the station, stopped for an instant to buy an evening paper, and then got into a train. For some time he sat staring with unseeing eyes at the print before him, his thoughts on the girl who was soon to be told a wonderful thing. Then his eyes, which had been mechanically following the headlines, began to record an impression, through successive repetitions; he found himself reading: