

acter. He *has* very high thoughts,"—vacancy was in his eye for a moment,—“so high they’re cloudy.”

And that was all. Mr. Hale made no further comment. Mr. Mitchell, a just man, was satisfied that he had done justice. Thus in the minds of two arbiters of the destinies of many men, John Hampstead, loyal, laborious who had served faithfully for seven years, was lifted for a moment until the sun of prospect flashed upon him,—lifted and then dropped. And they did not even know that nature, too, had dropped him,—that he was blind.

But just then a privileged person knocked and entered without waiting for an invitation. The newcomer was Doctor Gallagher, the “Company” oculist, his fine, dark eyes aglow with sympathy and importance.

“That boy Hampstead,” he began abruptly, “is in bad shape.”

“Hampstead!” ejaculated Mr. Mitchell antagonistically, as if it were impossible that lumbering mass of bone and muscle could ever be in bad shape.

“Yes,” affirmed the physician, with the air of one who announces a sensation, “he’s likely to go blind!”

“No!” ejaculated Mr. Mitchell, in still more emphatic tones of disbelief, though his blue eyes opened wide and grew round with shock and sympathetic apprehension.

“Yes,” explained Doctor Gallagher volubly. “Continual transcription, the sweep of the eye from the notebook page to the machine and back, year in and year out, for so long, has broken down the muscular system of the eye. He had a blind spell last night. He can see all right this morning. But to let him go to work would be criminal. I have him in the Company Hospital for two weeks of absolute rest, and then he will be all right. But the typewriter, never again! You can put him on the outside to solicit freight, or something like that.”