

time, aimlessly scratching, with his finger nails, on various parts of the office desk which stood before him.

Finally he raised suddenly up and, as though ashamed of his lolling posture, exclaimed:

"Well, I don't know that I can do any good loafing here! This affair is plain enough now. It is all my fault! My *judicious guess* was just about five per cent. too high! (I *must* have got those ores mixed.) They have burdened the furnace on my analysis and now there'll be no end of trouble, of course!"

"It serves me right! I hadn't any business to make that guess! But—" he continued after a moment's thought, "I doubt if there's one fellow in ten that would have done differently under the circumstances."

He was now becoming more resigned to his critical situation and presently rose and walked to the door of the laboratory.

"I can prepare for Jeff in good earnest now," thought he. "When he comes I'll simply make a clean breast of the affair and take the consequences. Of course I could lie out of it by sticking to my first analysis, but I've lied once, or just as good as lied, and that's enough for a while, I reckon."

He gazed out the door toward the furnaces. No figures were in sight, except a small colored boy hurrying along, carrying a dinner pail. Presently, however, Johnson noticed two men come out of the furnace engine-room. Although they were some distance off the Chemist recognized in a moment the lank form of Gray and the stout figure of another man, well known as Garrett, the furnace-man. They were coming toward the laboratory.

"Jeff won't pass me *this* time," thought Johnson, turning into his office to prepare for what he knew well was to be an important interview, especially for him.

He was perfectly calm, however, and felt ready for whatever might come. Taking up a book he seated himself