

"It's nothing, Brendt, just a little dizzy streak, that's all. Didn't see you coming."

"Evidently! But come with me to the club and you'll be all right in a jiffy."

Few people understood Dick Harding. To the casual observer he was nothing more than a well dressed "city chap" belonging perhaps to the upper circles. Only one or two of his closest friends knew of the hours spent in study and writing, and he often asked himself the old query—whether after all, it was of any use; whether success for him was not a fleeing phantom?

Although rather reserved, when aroused Dick was capable of intense anger; while few things escaped his notice yet he appeared very nonchalant. Always fastidiously dressed, and of athletic proportions, he was a man to attract attention.

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Two men could be observed strolling down the street earnestly engaged in conversation.

"Have you noticed anything wrong with Harding of late, DeVere?"

"Can't say that I have: seems to be as 'icy' as ever."

"Well, perhaps so, but last night, as I was hurrying home, not taking particular notice of my surroundings, Harding and I collided, full steam on. He acted queer and started on but I stopped him, and it was only then he recognized me. To my notion the usual 'woman in the case' is at the bottom of it all."

"Perhaps you are right. They say it does have some such effect. But to change the subject, are you going to the 'spread' to-night?"

"I suppose I shall attend, but those literary feasts become rather monotonous after a time. Now, had I written a book or so, I suppose I should feel perfectly at home."