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 newed vigor  
 that follows.

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 ready prepared with  
 vegetables and sea-  
 soning.

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 tains and buffets. Deal-  
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 or chicken) in a box, 30c. Imita-  
 tions won't do. They may look the  
 same but A, B, C is what you must order.

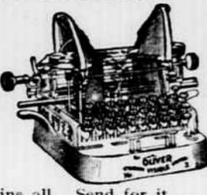
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curtly declined, whereupon he nipped the  
 end off it for himself; but Clancy only snig-  
 gered again, because he knew that he was  
 irritating a hard-headed American Scot.

"I don't blame you for losing heart, Mr.  
 Forbes," he said. "You lawyers invariably  
 go by the statute made and provided, and if  
 you cannot fit your facts into a clause you  
 find fault with the facts, never with the  
 clause. Now, I don't often prophesy, as  
 Steingall here will tell you, nor am I a betting  
 man; but I predict now that within a week  
 from this day Claude Waverton will either  
 confess that he is Charles Scott, or bolt. If  
 you disagree with me, I'll bet a new hat on  
 it, and you yourself shall judge whether I  
 have won or lost."

"What sort of hat?" inquired Forbes.  
 "Oh, as the weather is hot, shall we say a  
 twenty-dollar Panama?" and Clancy man-  
 aged to wink at Steingall unseen by the other.

"Man, are you crazy to talk about giving  
 twenty dollars for a hat? Anyhow, I'll go  
 you my twenty to yours, hard cash."

"The winner to stand a dinner," put in  
 Steingall.

Forbes considered the point. He regarded  
 the money as being as nearly his as was  
 possible in regard to a bet, and he could  
 afford to be generous with a little detective's  
 superfluous wealth. "Done!" said he.

"Look here!" cried Steingall. "I want to  
 be in this. Suppose our worthy friend makes  
 out that he really is Claude Waverton, and  
 convinces Forbes himself that he is telling  
 the truth, who wins?"

"I do," claimed Forbes.  
 "Hardly. Both you and Clancy agree  
 that he is a fraud. The point at variance  
 between you is simply this,—within a week,  
 will he own up or vanish?"

"Tell you what," said Clancy. "If he  
 proves himself to be Claude Waverton, the  
 bet is off, and you will stand the dinner!"

The three dined together many days later;  
 but time alone could determine which would  
 pay, and why.

**CHAPTER XVI. The Only Way**

WAVERTON and his inseparable com-  
 panion, Rice, returned to Lake Cham-  
 plain on Thursday evening, and both mas-  
 ter and man sighed contentedly when each was  
 installed in his own quarters. Rice had read  
 the newspapers in the train; thus gathering  
 almost as much information as if he had at-  
 tended the inquest. Indeed, he was better  
 able to weigh and analyze the evidence,  
 since the New York papers had printed  
 every word of it, and he had underlined a  
 good many sentences with a pencil.

His sallow face flushed when he read the  
 passage wherein Waverton had described  
 him as a "faithful and devoted servant and  
 friend," and his eye often traveled back to  
 that particular paragraph, even while he was  
 pondering the curious argument between  
 his master and the District Attorney, or the  
 question that led up to the encomium on  
 himself.

"Failed to remember my name when they  
 brought him to Asphodel House—now, I  
 wonder who said that?" mused Rice, and  
 when, as he fully expected, Waverton dis-  
 cussed the inquest with him on the morning  
 after their return, he reverted to that some-  
 what significant statement.

"What did Mr. Traherne mean by it,  
 Sir?" he asked. "Who could have put him  
 up to tell such a downright lie? You knew  
 me well enough when I kem in—and that  
 was the very first minute I could get past  
 Mrs. Delamar. 'Hello, Rice!' says you,  
 faintlike, but with a pleasant sort of smile  
 that fair choked me up, it did. 'Good  
 morning, Mr. Claude,' says I. 'I hope you  
 are feeling better this morning.' And 'Right  
 as rain,' says you. Not know me, indeed! I  
 wish I'd been in court when they told that  
 whopper!"

"Don't blame the lawyer, Rice," said  
 Waverton. "The question was suggested  
 by Mrs. Delamar. Possibly it was based  
 on some silly thing I said while my wits were  
 wool gathering."

"If you had a lawyer there, Sir, an' I'd  
 happened to be sittin' near him, I'd have  
 whispered a thing or two in his ear when  
 Mrs. Delamar was in the box. If luck had  
 gone ag'in' you, Mr. Claude, an' you had  
 died in Asphodel House, nobody would ever  
 have set eyes again on the twenty-five thou-  
 sand dollars you pulled in at Schwartz's  
 place that night. Mrs. Delamar had your  
 pocketbook stowed away, all right! I know  
 that!"

"She was only displaying what is called  
 an intelligent anticipation of future events,  
 Rice," laughed his master, who, oddly  
 enough, had laid a newspaper on the break-  
 fast table folded in such a way that it was  
 obvious he had been reading an article on  
 "The Future of the Argentine as a Producer  
 of Rubber."

"Ah, she's a deep one!" said the valet.  
 "She would never have spoken up as she did



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 no other could be built, the man who  
 owned that one might take it from  
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if she didn't guess that the police were on  
 her track. But, pardon me, Mr. Claude,—  
 wild hosses wouldn't pull it out of me only  
 for your own private ear, so to speak,—you  
 did buy that stuff at the drugstore. I re-  
 member you bringin' it to Mrs. Delamar's  
 house and sayin' to me when I found the  
 little parcel on your dressing table, 'Keep  
 off of it, Rice, unless you want to hop it  
 mighty quick!' or words to that effect."

"Did I tell you what the parcel contained?"  
 "No, Sir; but the druggist's name was on  
 the label, an' a word like 'venom,' which is  
 near enough to 'poison' to make one think  
 a bit."

"Quite correct. Well, forget it, and let  
 us try and forget too that such a person as  
 Mrs. Delamar is allowed to live. By the  
 way, in case of accident, just send a marked  
 copy of one of the New York newspapers to  
 Mrs. Waverton. Write, if you wish, and  
 say that you fancy she might like to read a  
 full report, which may not have appeared  
 in the paper she sees every day."

**D**URING a quiet and uneventful week-end  
 life followed a placid course. On a couple  
 of days rain fell heavily, and Waverton did  
 not go out, but spent many hours among  
 books that in other years he had never  
 opened.

Owing to the bad weather, the automo-  
 bile was not in requisition; yet time did not  
 weigh heavily on the hands of Armand, the  
 chauffeur, who had made the acquaintance  
 of an affable Frenchman residing in Sag-  
 inaw, a most cheery and entertaining person,  
 who seemed to know the world like a gazet-  
 teer, and its chief inhabitants like the Al-  
 manach de Gotha.

That same Frenchman, who spoke English  
 marvelously well when it suited his pur-  
 poses, quickly became the center of an ad-  
 miring circle at the local hotel, in which he  
 had secured an apartment. He would sit  
 there chatting by the hour, usually on the  
 veranda, whence his quick eyes would note  
 and ask questions about most people who  
 passed.

On Saturday, a very wet day, Rice had



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