

removing the axis of the earth, and this was founded on very reliable calculations, and was very probable.

Under these conditions the situation of J.T. Maston became each day more and more critical. Mrs. Evangelina Scorbitt trembled lest he would become the victim of a universal cry for vengeance. Perhaps she even had in her mind the idea of making him give up the information which he so heroically held to himself. But she did not dare to mention it to him and she did well. It would have been unwise for her to expose herself to the volley of rebukes he would have given her. As we may well understand, fright had taken a strong foothold in the city of Baltimore and the inhabitants became nearly unmanageable. The excitement was increased by articles appearing in the daily papers. In any case, if J.T. Maston had been found among the crowd of people, his fate would have been soon settled. He would have been given to the wild beast. But he was content and said: "I am ready for it." No matter what happened, J.T. Maston refused to make known the situation of the "x," knowing very well that if he should unveil the secret President Barbicane and Capt. Nicholl would be unable to finish their work. It was an interesting struggle—this fight of one man against the whole world. It only made J.T. Maston a grander and better man in the eyes of Evangelina Scorbitt, and also in the opinion of his associates of the Gun Club. The Secretary of the Gun Club became such a celebrated person that he began to receive letters, as all criminals do, from people who wished to have a few lines from the hand which was going to turn the world over. But even if this was all very nice it became every day more and more dangerous for our Secretary. The population hung day and night around the prison, with great noise and great tumult. The enraged crowd wanted to lynch J.T. Maston. The police saw the moment would come when they would be unable to defend the prison and the prisoner J.T. Maston. Being desirous of giving satisfaction and information to the American people, as well as to the people of other countries, the Government at Washington decided to put J.T. Maston before a court of justice. "What other people have not been able to accomplish the Judges will not," said Alcide Pierdeux, who had after all a kind of a friendly feeling for the



fearful moment.

Yes, all trembled, all save one person, and that one was the engineer Alcide Pierdeux. As he had not had time to make known to the public the discoveries which he had made by means of his last calculations, he drank a bumper of champagne to the health of both worlds in the café of one of the best known hotels. Just as the twenty-fourth minute after 5 o'clock, corresponding with midnight at Kilimanjaro, was reached—

At Baltimore, nothing.

At London, Paris, Constantinople, Berlin, nothing, not the least shock.

Mr. John Milne, standing in his coal mine at Shamokui with a seismometer which he had arranged there, did not note the least abnormal movement in the earth's shell in this part of the globe. In Baltimore the heavens were cloudy and it was impossible to note in the apparent movement of the stars any derangement which would have indicated the change in the earth's axis.

What a night J.T. Maston passed in his place of safety which was unknown to all save Mrs. Evangelina Scorbitt! He was beside himself, this visionary engineer. He could not rest in his place of hiding. He seemed to have grown old in one day and looked sharply out to see if the daily course of the sun was modified. This would have been a certain proof of the success of his work. This change could not be seen even on the morning of the 23rd of September, because at this date the star invariably rises in the east for all points of the globe. The next day the sun travelled over the horizon the same as it had always done.

The European delegates had assembled on the platform of their hotel. They had by their side instruments of extreme precision which would enable them to note if the sun took a course in the direction of the equator.

Well, nothing changed. A few minutes after the rising of the sun the great disc inclined away towards the Australian hemisphere. Nothing was changed in its apparent course.

Major Donellan and his associates saluted the heavenly torch with