

Chance (?) Saves My Life

The morning after Mr. Mellett's death I was called on the telephone and put on notice, by some unknown person, that I had one hour in which to get out of Canton; that I could go voluntarily within the hour, but if I waited longer I probably would go in a pine box. My business association with Mr. Mellett had apparently been misunderstood. His murderers evidently believed I was directly connected with the exposé he was making in his newspapers.

I did not wait for the one hour time limit to expire, but immediately got into my automobile and drove down to the home of relatives in the mountains of West Virginia, where I remained until the murderers had been placed in jail.

That experience came well within the category described by Mr. Carnegie as an "emergency" that forces men to think. For the first time in my life I knew the pain of constant fear. My experience of a few years before, in Columbus, had filled my mind with doubt and temporary indecision, but this one had filled it with a fear which I seemed unable to remove. During the time that I was in hiding I seldom left the house at night, and when I did step out I kept my hand on an automatic pistol in my coat pocket, with the safety catch unlatched for immediate action. If a strange automobile stopped in front of the house where I was hiding, I went into the basement and carefully scrutinized its occupants through the basement windows.

After some months of this sort of experience, my nerves began to crack. My courage had completely left me. The ambition which had heartened me during the long years of labor in my search for the causes of failure and success also had departed.