White. Thirty-five dollars was high-water mark. With some notion of learning how to become a successful author, Mr. White next secured a position with A. C. McClurg, book-sellers, of Chicago. A better knowledge of human nature and nine dollars a week were about the only net results, however, and after some little writing, which found its way into review columns and magazines, White set out for Hudson Bay. It was about this time that he completed the manuscript of *The Claim Jumpers,* which was brought out by Appleton and had a very favourable reception. *The Westerners,* finished later, was bought by Munsey for serial publication for $500. The author was paid in five dollar bills and he says that when he had stuffed the money in his pockets he left abruptly for fear some one would change his mind and want all that money back. The publication of this story marked the turn in the tide. Stewart Edward White had arrived.

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The Blazed Trail was written in a lumber camp in the depth of a Northern winter. The only hours Mr. White could spare for writing were in the early morning, so he would begin at four A.M. and write till eight o'clock, then put on his snow shoes and go out for a day's lumbering.

When the manuscript was finished he gave it to Jack Boyd, the foreman, to read. Boyd began it after supper one evening and when White awoke the next morning at four o'clock he found him still at it. As Boyd never even read a newspaper, White regarded this as a triumph and felt that success was assured. In connection with this book Mr. White tells an amusing story of an Englishwoman who came into a bookshop where he happened to be and asked the clerk for a copy of *Blasé Tales.* He thinks she must have been terribly disappointed.

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Conjurer's House was written in New York after Mr. White's return from the Hudson Bay country, and *The Silent Places* during the ruffled grouse season in Michigan. At the time the author was busy training a Llewellyn setter, and gave to the writing of the latter book what intervals this important occupation afforded him.

He laughingly refers to this book as the best example of "literary atmosphere" that he knows, and thereby hangs a story. His aunt began reading *Silent Places* one summer evening and after an hour or more was observed to get up, quite absorbed and book in hand, draw a shawl about her shoulders and resume her reading. "This," says Mr. White, "is what is known as 'getting an atmosphere'—and a cold one, too!" *The Forest* Mr. White regards as one of the most instructive books he has ever written—that is, for himself. It was the story of a canoe trip and was published serially in the *Outlook.* In the course of the narrative the author innocently mentioned that he had discovered a good, tight tent and would be glad to tell any one really interested where it could be had. In the first year that the book was out he received 1,100 inquiries and they are still coming. "This taught me two things," he remarked: "not to do it again, and that it pays to advertise."

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A Story of a Story

On the twenty-fifth of this month will be published *The Destroyer,* a tale of international politics and intrigue, by Burton E. Stevenson. This publication date was chosen in deference to Mr. Stevenson's wishes, for it is the second anniversary of the event with which the tale opens, the mysterious destruction of the French battleship *La Liberté,* in the harbour of Toulon. Mr. Stevenson has a superstition about that date for, by the merest chance, it was on the first anniversary that the tale was completed, and this seemed to him a coincidence so singular that he determined to follow it up. In fact, there are a number of singular things about the story, which, aside from the tale itself, are in themselves of considerable interest.

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"I don't believe much in publicity," said Mr. Stevenson, "for usually all any one wants to know about a book he

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can find out by reading it, but there *are* one or two things I should like to say about *The Destroyer.* In the first place, I never intended to write it. I had just finished *The Gloved Hand,* and had arranged to go away and rest, when I woke up one night with the central idea of *The Destroyer* in my head. (I was distinctly conscious of the process of cerebration—the breaking down of brain tissue—which accompanied the idea, whether as cause or effect I am too little of a psychologist to know. But I remember lying there and wondering at the peculiar sensation.) The next morning the idea still had hold of me, but I went ahead with my preparations for departure, for certainly I had no intention of beginning one story within a week of having finished another one. One mystery story a year is about my limit (as a matter of fact, I have written only five in ten years). But my intentions didn't seem to cut any figure in the matter; the idea grew, developed, took on shape, without any conscious effort on my part—in fact, in spite of my effort to stop it. At the end of a week, to my own astonishment and the astonishment and lively disapproval of the whole family, I was at work. I had never before worked so hard or so continuously, but the work didn't exhaust me as I had feared it would. In fact, if any book ever wrote itself, that one did, and I don't feel that I am wholly responsible for it. One night, about six weeks later, I wrote 'The End' at the bottom of the manuscript, turned out the light and went downstairs. 'Well,' I said, 'it's done. We can start for New York whenever you're ready.' My wife looked at me. Then she looked at her desk calendar. 'Let me see,' she said, 'this is the twenty-fifth of September.' And then she looked at me again. 'Why it's the anniversary of the destruction of *La Liberté!*' she cried, and I confess that I, too, felt a little queer, for I had lost all track of dates."

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The Shade of Phileas Fogg

Whatever pleasant amenities may be exchanged between Mr. John Henry Mears and his predecessor as the holder of the time record for encircling the earth, M. André Jaeger-Schmidt, of Paris, both of them are deeply in debt to the shade of that phlegmatic Englishman of fiction, Mr. Phileas Fogg, of Saville Row, Burlington Garden, and the Reform Club. For it was Fogg and his creator, Jules Verne, who started the fashion for racing round the globe, and however rapidly new records may come to supplant old ones, that time-honoured title, *Tour of the World in Eighty Days,* will never entirely lose its charm. It required forty-one years to reduce the eighty days of the novel to the somewhat less than thirty-six days of the latest achievement. When we read the account of Charles Dickens's travels in the United States and realise the immense amount of time then required to go from one city to another the progress indicated by Phileas Fogg's itinerary in 1872 seems vastly more impressive than the advance which enabled Mr. Mears to reduce the eighty days of Verne's story to thirty-five days, twenty-one hours and thirty-five minutes.

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As a matter of fact, if we eliminate the long sea journeys from Brindesi to Suez and thence to Bombay, and from Calcutta to Hongkong and Yokohama which were made unnecessary by the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the disparity is not so great as it appears on the surface. In the schedule planned before Phileas Fogg's departure, thirty-seven days were allotted for those journeys. Mr. Mears in travelling over land from St. Petersburg, was able to sail from Yokohama on the *Empress of Russia* twelve days after his departure from the Russian capital. That alone meant a saving of twenty-five days due to the change of route. In 1872 nine days were required from New York to London. In 1913 this part of the trip consumes a little more than five days. Fogg was expected to travel from the Pacific to the Atlantic, starting from

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