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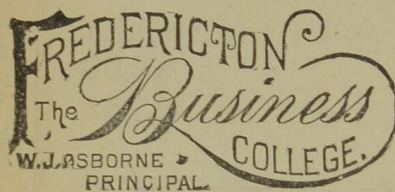
VALUE :- is what you get out of a thing while you have it. It is measured by economy of operation, freedom from repairs, constant service and length of life

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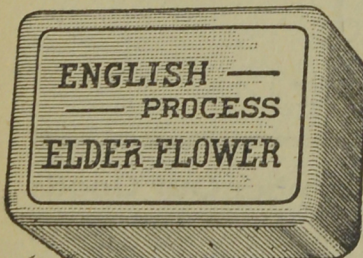
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The Lash of Circumstance

— BY —
Harry Irving Greene

Author of "Yosonde of the Wilderness"

Supplied Exclusively in Canada by The British & Colonial Press Service, Limited.

"Let's see. I don't know that I can tell you very much—you know. I never paid any particular attention to her," he began in a quizzical glance at me. "Still, if you will agree to keep it a family secret, I might remember a few things. Promise, honest Injun?"

"Honest Injun."
"Well, then, here goes. Mattie Madden was born in this town about thirty years ago of poor but dishonest parents. But she was a beauty, even as a girl, and people forgave her parentage on that account. She eloped out of school with a more or less account Englishman named Dace, who afterwards got into the service of his Government over in India or some other outlandish place on the back of the map. He died with his boots on."

"How; was he killed?" I inquired. Bruce grew a trifle more serious. "Well, now, that is something I am no authority upon. I can only repeat to you in confidence what I have heard and read. But the report has it that it happened in a disagreement with a Russian nobleman over her—one of those cheerful little affairs that sometimes occur out that way, you know; referee and seconds to the front; wine and jealousy in the background; moon in the distance—you understand. Anyway it made a ripping good story for the journals. Next thing I heard of her she was back here. I hope you are not going to make a fool of yourself over her."

His general tone had slightly irritated me, but the last remark positively nettled. "No; I think one in the family is enough," I retorted. But he slipped the thrust aside in his usual smooth way, laughing.

"I guess that's right. Come to think of it, I never did know you to make a fool of yourself over anything. That does seem to be my specialty, doesn't it? But while I give you credit for having a better balanced head than I have, I'll tell you what I do in certain cases. When I get up against a proposition like cocaine in wine, or a woman like Mrs. Dace, I run for the fence. They are too blamed seductive to fool with, and I don't take any chances with them. She has got the beauty and graces of all the mythological goddesses combined, but that does not count for everything. If I remember rightly, those mythological goddesses were a pretty bad lot."

With the instinctive desire that Clare had possessed to fly to his defense, I now felt myself surging to Mrs. Dace's. But I held myself in leash. "Even assuming for the sake of argument that I should desire to make a fool of myself over her, what possible object could she have in encouraging me to such idiocy?" I asked. He puckered up his mouth and thrust his hands deep in his pockets.

"Well, now, that is one of the funny things about women. Of course, we don't know much about them; but we do know this: We know that the only reason they care for us is because they can't get anything better. If the gods came to earth, the only thing left for man to do would be to cast himself like swine into the sea. And therein is where we differ from womankind. Man doesn't want angels; plain, mortal woman—provided she is not too plain, of course—is good enough for him. But inasmuch as she can't achieve the gods, on this earth at least, she turns to man as the next best substitute. Now, you are a strapping young fellow, good looking and all that, and such men have always interested women from the beginning. But, remember, there are women and women. Take Clare, for instance. She is beautiful, too, and keeps herself looking as attractive as possible in order to make people like her. Yet she is as harmless as a butterfly. Some others aren't. You ought to know something of the species before you pick up a thing just because it is gaudy. You might get stung."

Absolutely without information concerning her beyond what Bruce himself had confided in me, half angry at myself that I should take the trouble to answer him, I nevertheless yielded to my impulse to defend her. With considerable emphasis I told him that I should refuse to believe any insinuations against her until I had positive knowledge of their truth. He listened silently, growing suddenly sober at my warmth, and when I had finished, addressed me with a mollifying pat upon the back.

"Whew! I didn't think you were going to get so warmed up over a little thing like that. But you may be sure I have no desire to disparage your lady. I told you to start with that I knew almost nothing about her except by hearsay, and you know as well as I do what that sort of evidence is worth. They won't listen to it in law. She may be pure gold for all I know; but I was just warning you to keep your eyes peeled. You've felt her out. But now I'll tell you a fact. If you expect to hold a princess, you have got to be a prince of good fellows yourself and go out and buy her a castle every few days. Furthermore, in this case, you are going to run up against a real dragon."

I smiled. "Dragons always get the worst of it in the story books; fire, smoke and all," I returned with a touch of sarcasm. But Bruce seemed very much in earnest.

"Well, you won't find this one any fairy tale beast that you can chop up with a tin sword. He is an up-to-date, high-gear, sixty horse-power, mile-a-minute juggernaut, and you had better keep out of his way or you'll get smashed."

"And the dragon is who?"
"Richard Mackay, boodler prince and political boss, who was indicted by the grand jury in connection with

that thirty-million dollar traffic rise grab from the city; and who by some means, unknown to me, escaped the cell that he ought to garnish," he shot over his shoulder as he turned away. "Thank you, ever so much," I retorted.

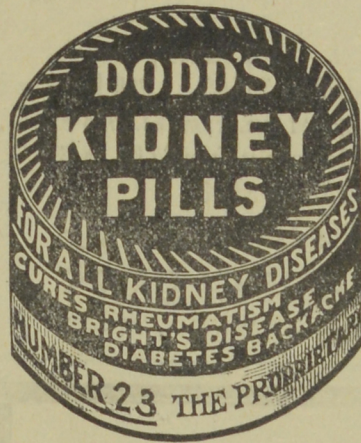
CHAPTER V.

The love of a man for a woman is a strange disease. Its methods of attacking its victims are varied; its effects manifold. It may be spasmodic or insidious, acute or chronic, violent as the toothache or unsuspected as a slow fever. Its subjects may be melancholic, exhilarated, tormented, soothed or affected in any one of a dozen other different ways. In my case, to start with, it was both insidious and exhilarating. I was somewhat like a man who has been shot through some soft part by a modern high-power rifle. He perhaps does not feel it at the time, and may run on for a considerable distance before a sharp pang notifies him that he is badly hit, indeed. Then he sits down in considerable astonishment and wonders just when he got it. I had felt no shock as yet, and had no doubt of my ability to run out of danger at any time. I made an engagement to call upon Mrs. Dace, and then I squared myself with particularity as to details. That done, I squared myself before the mirror for a view of the general effect.

I could not help but feel that Bruce had spoken only the truth regarding my personal appearance. I am six feet tall, and when I was in college was a scintillating athletic star of the first magnitude. Nor do I believe that I am any valuer than the average man, but if any woman whom I happened to be with was ever displeased with my physical personage, I never became aware of it. Mrs. Dace had evidently approved of it, for she paid me the round-about compliment of confessing in a general way her admiration of tall, well-set-up men. Assuming myself by a last sweeping glance in the glass that I could do nothing more to improve my toilet, I departed.

The Arcadia was one of the modern palace apartments that are springing up so magically in our greater cities. Its entrance was castle like; its outer court a bower. Its height was great, and its general effect imposing. There were private garages on each floor for the cars of its tenants. I went in at the entrance where I had left her, took the elevator to the fifth floor, and rang the bell of her suite. The door was opened by an inscrutable-faced mulatto maid, who surveyed me up and down with a quick keenness that made me feel that she would never forget me. I inquired for her mistress, and was immediately shown into a handsomely furnished reception parlor. Promptly Mrs. Dace came floating from between the portieres.

(To Be Continued.)



ANNIVERSARY OF GREAT BOSTON FIRE

Boston, Mass., Nov. 8.—To many old residents of Boston tomorrow will be a day of great significance, because it will be the forty-first anniversary of the biggest fire in the city's history, when eight hundred buildings occupied by one thousand business concerns in the heart of the City were burned with a loss of about \$70,000,000 and causing the death of eleven people and injuries to many others.

The fire started at 7:20 o'clock in the evening of November 9, 1872, in the heart of the wholesale business section. The conflagration raged until the following afternoon. Fifty cities and towns of New England rushed men and apparatus to aid the Boston firemen, but the assistance was of little avail because the water supply failed at a critical moment. As a result of the fire, loss twenty leading fire insurance companies went into bankruptcy.

Monday will see the annual spectacle of Lord Mayor's Day in London when Sir Thomas Van Sittart Bowater will be formally installed as chief magistrate of the city.

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Mr. A. W. Dryden, Amherst, N.S., writes:—"I am going to tell you what Burdock Blood Bitters has done for us. My son 'Vance,' when only nine months old, got an abscess on his cheek bone. I took him to a doctor in St. John, N.B., and he lanced it, and told me it would get well in a few days, and wanted me to keep it squeezed out. It did not seem to get any better, so my wife took him back. The Doctor told her to take him home and it would soon get better. It would gather and break, and it went on that way until he was over four years old.

"He lost four pieces of bone out of where it was lanced, and two pieces came from his mouth; he has lost all of his cheek bone, and his eye was drawn down. I took him to doctors in St. John, Moncton, and Amherst, and all wanted me to let him go under an operation. He was so small I told them that if he was going to die he might as well die as he was as to go there and be all cut to pieces, so I declined to have the operation done. I told them I was going to try Burdock Blood Bitters, as I had heard my mother talk so much about it. I got a bottle, and when it was about half gone noticed it was doing good, and before many days the sore stopped running, and healed up, and the abscess has never broken out again. This happened nearly six years ago, so you can see I have great faith in Burdock Blood Bitters, and I can say with all my heart that it is the best blood medicine in the world."

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