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LOWE AND A TITLE

"I didn't expect this pleasure, Lady Ferndale!"
"What pleasure?" asks Jeanne, innocently.

"Of—of seeing you," he says. "I had no idea that Mr. Vane was—in fact, it's all a mystery to me! How can he be Lord Ferndale—has anybody died? Has he come into the title? I didn't know he was connected with the Ferndales, even!"

Jeanne hangs her head and turns color. In his eagerness, Clarence has bent down to hear the explanation, and it is at this moment that Vane looks around the epergne and sees them.

"He—he always was the Marquis of Ferndale," says Jeanne.
"Good heavens!" exclaims Clarence, looking back, mentally, "he was! And we all parted him on the back and patting his head! And that old fellow, Lamblton, came the grand? Well, if a fellow goes in for that sort of thing, he must take the consequences—that is, I mean, of course, who was to know?"

Jeanne says "yes" but her long lashes droop over her eyes.
"Who was to know—except, of course, yourself Lady Ferndale. I'd love, you kept it well!"

Then he stops short, as a sudden thought takes possession of him, body and soul, and makes his heart beat.
"Who was to know?" he says, with sudden moodiness.

"Yes," says Jeanne, and at the coldness of the assent Clarence's face clears again. He glances around at her with greater courage; yes, she is as beautiful, what is more beautiful than ever, and as girlish; just, in fact, the Jeanne who set his heart beating nine months ago, and whose refusal of his love has only increased it tenfold.

And Jeanne?
Well, Jeanne had grown more charitable and less critical. Clarence has improved in appearance, in manners, in the quantity and quality of his brains, and she is not sorry to see him.

You cannot help examining her with a good-looking young fellow who waits on you with hand and eye, discusses your taste in the matter of the menu as dependently as if life and death depended on it, nearly breaks his neck in getting a fever from the epergne, because you happen to say that it has a pretty bud, and evidently is doing, in all and every possible way, his best to be agreeable.

"How I envy you!" she says—and she sighs lightly. "I once asked Lord Ferndale, the great wit, whom he should consider the happy man. What do you think he said? The man who at five-and-thirty has lost his memory and saved his digestion!"

"At any rate, my digestion is all right," says Vane, laughing. "And having lost your memory you are the happy man," she says.

And she looked up at him with a sweep of the dark lids that give depth and meaning to the dark blue eyes.
Vane seeks safety in silence. If to be envied is to be happy, Vane ought to be in the highest state of felicity, for men are envying him the lovely girl who sits opposite him with the Ferndale diamonds in her hair.

Slowly but surely the elaborately planned dinner works through its courses, the fantastic fabric of sweetstuffs takes the place of more solid food; pomegranates and melons lie demurely on fig leaves from Alexandria, two sent fountains throw up miniature jets of perfume, water, conversation grows general, and the countess rises as Sparks, the butler, comes toward Charlie bearing a bottle of yellow seal.

Jeanne gathers up her creased-worked robe. Clarence is attention to the last; gives her her fan, and with a humble look, holds out the flower he has ravished from the epergne.
"Want you take this?" he says.

Jeanne takes it with a smile, and Clarence goes back to the table and drains a goodly glass of the yellow seal with a heart fluttering like—a man in love.
While dinner has been in progress, the servants have thrown wide the doors of the conservatory adjoining the great drawing-room, and the mimic forest of ferns and flowers is lit up with daintily shaped grotesque lanterns.

Jeanne, Jeanne like, makes straight for this, and seats herself in a low chair beside a marble fountain that leers down at her as he throws a spray of water from his scoped hands.
This meeting with Lady Lucelle and Lord Vane is so unexpected that she scarcely yet realizes it. Lady Lucelle's prophecy had come true; they had met again, and with every appearance of good will.

With an inward mortification, Jeanne reflected upon the consummate presence of mind with which the fashionable beauty had set aside the fact of their having seen each other previously, or the exquisite well bred air of composed pleasure with which she had smiled; and, as Jeanne reflected, she sighed.

Three months ago she expressed a wish to enter the great world. How could she have guessed that it was so false and treacherous? Scarcely have these thoughts flitted through her mind than a soft voice says in her ear:
"Well, Lady Jeanne," and looking up Jeanne sees the blue eyes bent on her with smiling audacity. Jeanne looks up there with a sudden flash of color, but there is nothing more than the usually delicate tint on Lady Lucelle's fair skin, not a trace of confusion or embarrassment. Rather one would say an air of delicate enjoyment, as if the situation amused her.

She even laughs softly as she watches Jeanne's expressive face.
"Lady Ferndale," drawing a chair close to Jeanne's, and leaning forward with the most graceful ease—just as she did, Jeanne remembers, on that afternoon in the little drawing room at the Gate House. "I wouldn't give a penny for your thoughts, for I know them already." Jeanne raises her eyebrows but does not speak.

enough to humor them. And some of them have better cause than you. You've got your plumcake, you know, where some of them have lost theirs—through me, or so they think. Come, what harm have I done you?"

"I don't know," says Jeanne, and indeed, she does not.
"There!" exclaimed Lady Lucelle, with soft triumph. "I thought so! Why, if you consider it, it is I who ought to dislike you, but I don't; honestly, I would if I could, but I can't. I don't think anyone could. Oh, I am not flattering. You are too clever to be won by such poor chaff as that, especially when it comes from a woman's hand. And, besides, you are too happy to remember old scores. Lady Jeanne, honestly, I liked you that first time—which will never speak of any more—that first time I saw you; I was a little jealous, perhaps, for you were most exacting, but I liked you, and I do want you to like me. Let us swear a friendship, as the man says in the play."

Jeanne smiles. What can she say—what would anyone say in answer to the appeal, made in the sweetest and most liquid of tones, and with a frankness which seems truth itself? Lady Lucelle takes the smile as an assent.

"That's all right," she says, with a little fluttering sign of satisfaction, "and I am quite happy. Candidly, I couldn't have afforded to quarrel with so great a person as the Marchioness of Ferndale! Why, a cut direct from you would have socially ruined me! See now how wholly I trust you! Is there any one of those who would do so honestly? They all profess to love you, but they don't. They all envy you, and most of them hate you. There isn't one of them, and she looked toward the room full of women with a placid smile, "and you have gone on their knees to get what you get without the asking. My dear Jeanne, it must be nice to be a marchioness, only to feel that every unmarried—and most of the married—women one meets would be glad to stifle one in the back if stabbing were the fashion."

Jeanne listens with an uneasy smile. From any other lips such plain truths would sound coarse and startling, but spoken in Lady Lucelle's soft, ringing tones, they do not strike home with less poignancy.

"Not one!" she continues. "Look over your fan at that tall girl in the blue satin. She is one of the Peerland girls—there are five of them, and unmarried. This is Augusta. Poor Augusta! She's tracked Lord Ferndale for two seasons, from London to Paris, from Paris to Scotland, up hill down dale. She must love you! So must her mother, the old lady in the turban, with the music box. Gets up in the morning and holds his gun, which she can't bear the sight of, and pats his horse, of which she is morally afraid. You will see when he comes in how much she will draw the curtains or sent by mail at 25 cents a box by writing The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. Send for our little book on the care of infants and young children—free to all mothers."

Jeanne cannot help smiling in spite of herself.
"Poor Lord Nugent!" she says.
"Just so," assents Lady Lucelle, with a little shrug of the shoulders. "But he is used to it, and can take care of himself—some of them can't, and fall easy victims. Tea!" she breaks off, as a footman approaches. "Thanks. What a fortune! This is a remnant of the old, party, ruffled days, when women were kept in servitude. I wonder when the men will learn how much we hate the society of each other, and let us share the port and rare wines and best stories which they reserve till we've left the dining-room. My dear, there is nothing so deceitful as a man. Did you ever notice how grave and sedate they come in, just as if they had been learning the shorter catechism, instead of chuckling over their shooting notes and scandal. All the life goes out of them as they enter the drawing-room, where we sit like tame cats in a cage, lapping our tea or lounging at the piano. By the way, does Lord Ferndale sing now?"

The question is not an abrupt one for Lady Lucelle never asked an abrupt question in her life—but it is so unexpected that Jeanne winces. "Vane has not sung since the wedding day."
"I think not," she says, trying to speak carelessly.

"Really?" says Lady Lucelle, glancing through her half-closed eyelids at Jeanne's averted face. "That strikes me as a dreadful waste of fine material. I have often thought it had such a voice and such a talent for painting; it is rather unfair to other men who have neither the talent nor thing else. I'm afraid he doesn't paint much, does he?"

Jeanne smiles. As a fact, Vane has done little else but paint; but she is spared a reply for the countess, who has made several attempts to get to her, reaches her at last, and Lady Lucelle is induced to go to the piano.

"Oh, yes, I'll sing if you want me," she says; "that is, until Lord Ferndale comes into the room. He once did me steadyfast eyes, 'you've been thinking ever since we were introduced,' and she laughs softly—"what a bold, wicked creature I am."

A small circle encloses Jeanne; plans are being made for the morrow. There is some talk of meeting at the little party at luncheon; would Lady Ferndale like that and how would Lady Ferndale like to go? Would she like to go in the saddle, or drive.

One and all consult her opinion on every point, each hanging on her decision as if she were an empress. Jeanne smilingly refers it to the majority—anything will please her and the matter is still under discussion when the gentlemen, looking as Lady Lucelle prognosticated, very grave and sedate, come clustering in.

song, notwithstanding Vane's presence. If it be true that she sings without heart, she sings with plenty of art. Like everything else she does, she plays and sings artistically, and with that charm which grace alone can yield.

Vane looks from his seat to give the general murmur of thanks and meets her eyes fixed on him.
"Do you remember that song," she says.

Vane tries to look as if he did not. "Will you come and sing for us?" He smiles and shakes his head.
"You refuse?" says Lady Lucelle. "I must go and ask Lady Ferndale to intercede, then," and she looks around. But Jeanne is not in the same place. At the end of the conservatory, leaning to the terrace, there is the glimpse of an embroidered dress, and a tall figure remarkably like Clarence's.

"Rather than you should think that trouble necessary," says Vane, and he comes to the piano as he speaks, but reluctantly.
"Will you sing?" asks Lady Lucelle, with downcast eyes, and a thrill of triumph in her heart. He has not sung for three months and he is singing for her.

"Anything there is," says Vane, not concealingly, but indifferently. She turns over the music, and comes upon the Neapolitan song which Jeanne had heard at the Gate House some months ago.

"Shall I play for you? I remember every note," she adds, in a low voice, and her fingers touch the keys pensively for a moment.

A murmur runs around the room. The fame of Vane's voice is widespread. Men stick their hands in their pockets, and throw back their heads as is their wont when they want to listen; women cease to talk, and their eyes are turned toward the distant murmur of the two persons at the end of the conservatory, who were not listening—Jeanne and Clarence.

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CURRENT GUARDS THE GOLD.

Chicago's new Federal Building is remarkable for the attention paid to the minutest details in its construction. Its heating and ventilating system is one of the most complete in the country and electric equipment of the sub-terreous vaults is particularly interesting.

Signs of Evil Omen.

If a dish towel falls from the hand to the floor you are sure to have company at dinner that night. This applies to the cook, the mistress of the house and the hubby who helps his wife wash the dishes.

The Ad. and the Collector.

Some time ago a man who contemplates writing a comprehensive History of Advertisements began to collect specimens from all parts of the world. He originally intended to make a complete collection, but he has abandoned the idea for the simple reason that, unlike postage stamps, the number of advertisements is infinite and their variety past imagination.

CURRENT COMMENT

While Russia is down waiting to be de-lashed out, Japan is hardly winded, and shows an astonishing power of endurance and reserve force for a country of such area and population. This wonderful resourcefulness and elasticity is largely a growth of recent years, and testifies to the progress made by the little island people in the ways of modern civilization.

Table with 2 columns: United States, Japan. Rows include Population, Debt after war, Imports, Exports, Bank capital, Bank deposits, Public revenue.

Commenting on this statement the New York Journal of Commerce says: "The United States in 1865 not only had a debt nearly four times that of Japan at the present time, but had only half the population to sustain it. The net burden of the individual Japanese today, therefore, on account of the public debt is only about one-eighth the burden which fell upon the citizen of the North at the close of the war. Ability to carry this burden must be gauged, so far as public statistics afford a guide, by the volume of foreign trade and banking operations. These show that while the foreign trade of Japan is at present only about half what that of the United States was in 1860, her banking capital and bank deposits do not fall far behind." Japan's wise course in protecting her gold reserve by floating foreign loans and creating funds in London and New York is in striking contrast with that of the United States in suspending specie payments, paper money going down to 40 cents on the dollar almost at one rush.

The authority already quoted says: "Not only in regard to maintaining gold payments, but in prompt resort to taxation, Japanese statesmen have shown themselves more enlightened than those of America forty-five years ago. The figures presented above, showing an annual public revenue in Japan equal to that of the United States in 1860, shows how resolutely and fearlessly the policy has been pursued of raising war funds by taxation instead of relying exclusively upon loans. Such a policy is worth many times the funds which it actually brings to the Treasury, because of the profit it affords of the energy and good faith of the Government."

Labouchere says we eat too much; fasting, he believes to be the remedy for most human ills. But we are not all Tanners or Sacchos, and starvation and heavy manual labor do not agree well.

Good crops in the Northwest and good crops in Ontario. The farmer is in luck.

A Great African Republic Coming?

Already the colored man is a formidable force in the game of party politics in one—and the oldest—South African colony. The native vote in this colony has become so large, and the natives are pressing their numerical advantage so strongly, that the whites have already raised the question of a suffrage limitation to save themselves from political annihilation. But it is clear enough that this expedient will not save them. The population of Cape Colony, including the territories is, in round numbers, 1,800,000, and the white population 377,000. Day by day the power of the native grows. The gate of the political arena stands wide open to him, and he is not slow to enter. The negroes everywhere are a remarkably fecund race, and they are increasing relatively, much faster than the whites. Africa is first of all the black man's country, and all that climatic conditions and the congenial environment of a native habitat can do to help him in his struggle upward are there present.

Table with 2 columns: Country, Public debts of the principal nations given as follows.

The proportion which the public debt bears to the estimated national capital, a knowledge of which is necessary to an understanding of what the figures indicate, is said to be:

Table with 2 columns: Country, Percentage of debt to national capital.

The great railway companies are among the greatest factors that tend to temperance on this continent. At a banquet in Buffalo the other evening Mr. C. J. Phillips, Superintendent of the Buffalo division of the Lackawanna, said the time was when a railroad company paid little attention to the lives of its employes, especially when they were off duty.

Recklessness on Railroads.

"But time and experience," he said, "has demonstrated the necessity of corporations taking cognizance of employes, not only when they are on duty, but off duty as well. The habits of a man when he is off duty determine largely his efficiency when he is on duty. The engineer, the flagman, the telegraph operator, the dispatcher, who takes his regular rest, never drinks or eats to excess, comes on duty with a clear brain, seldom ever makes a mistake in the discharge of his duty." The man who is irregular or un-

steady in his habits is a man who makes costly mistakes, he said. In this way the railway companies are doing more effective temperance work than some of our temperance societies or churches.

Mr. Bryce, in opening the Manor Park Free Library, which is part of Mr. Carnegie's gift to East Ham, England, said: "There was no better way of providing for pleasure in this life than by cultivating the taste and habit of reading books. The taste and habit of reading books was one of the purest pleasures—it was one of the most enduring pleasures, it was a pleasure which lasted through life, a pleasure which none of the vicissitudes of life could destroy and a pleasure which afforded a solace and a refuge among those vexations and regrets which life brought to them all."

The young man who spends his winter evenings kicking his heels at street corners or playing pool or in some other useless way, would find it much to his advantage were he to cultivate a taste for such pleasures as are to be derived from reading books. A man can have no better companion than a good book.

That Sir William Wallace still lives in the hearts of the Scottish people is attested by the fact that fully 1,500 people assembled at Robroyston, near Glasgow, on Saturday, the 5th instant, to commemorate his betrayal, which occurred exactly six centuries ago. The gathering was held under the auspices of the Scottish Patriotic Association, and stirring speeches were delivered. Resolutions were adopted expressing satisfaction at the action taken by the Convention of the Royal Burghs in pressing upon the attention of the educational authorities the necessity of having Scottish history taught adequately in the schools, and deploring the apathy of most Scottish members of Parliament in regard to the national rights and honor of Scotland.

Wireless telegraphy has already become a commercial enterprise. According to a Parliamentary report reprinted by the Telegraph Age, 111 messages were received by the British Post Office in January, February and March of this year for transmission by wireless telegraphy to ships at sea. In the same months the post office received from ships 1,655 messages. The total receipts from this branch of the empire's telegraph business were £74.

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Vertical text on the right margin: T H I S O R I G I N A L D O C U M E N T I S I N V E R Y P O O R C O N D I T I O N