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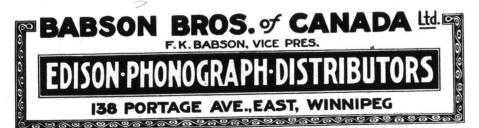
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Light-**Fingered**

Continued from Page 9

And itself even. then we're not really farmers. My husband was a professor in a college in India Ruth was born in India—and then his

health broke down and he had to come home. He-" The specialist sat up suddenly.

"India!" he exclaimed. "Was he-is he a St. Cross College man?" Mrs. Lister nodded.

"With one arm?" "Yes. Did you know him?"

"I have heard of him." The doctor's eye had wandered from his undusted tables to the plants in the window drooping for lack of water.

"Mrs. Lister I'm going to study your daughter. Can you spare her for a few weeks?' "Oh! But-I thought if by indirect

means we could —' "Can't be done. I want her here

under my eye. She interests me. Get some foreign woman in to do the work." "Ruth mustn't know I've told you!" "No, no. Of course not."

"Then you really will undertake the case?" and hope glowed in the faded

"I'll try. As I say, I'm merely a student at this kind of thing. But I want to watch and study the girl. I need a young lady to admit my patients and to keep the three rooms tidy. It isn't arduous work and the hours are ten to one and then two to six. I've had a good deal of difficulty in securing even a passably good girl since my old one left to be married. It may not be much to offer the daughter of a professor -" "Oh, she'll take it quick enough! You

you won't be afraid she might —"
"Let her try!" said Dr. Service with a brief smile. "In fact I'll confess that that is exactly what I hope I can trap her into. Better a mighty good scare

from me than-He broke off significantly. The woman

took a long breath. "Do-do you think you can cure her?"

-eagerly.

"I have hopes." They rose. Mrs. Lister opened her handbag. Dr. Service held up a protesting hand.

"No cure, no pay," he said, throwing

open the door.

Two women more unlike than Mrs. Lister and her daughter, Ruth, it would have been hard to find. Thus reflected Dr. Service three days later as in the lunch hour interval he found time to observe the young woman more closely. She had arrived in the morning about nine, eager-eyed, fresh-cheeked and more than a little doubtful of obtaining the job. She was city-wise enough to know that positions so desirable as this didn't go a-begging very long. And great had been her joy at being taken on "on trial.

She was tidying the instrument stand. Dr. Service pretended to read his mail. His ruminations, one eye over the top of his paper, went something like this:

"A regular little speed demon! Neat as nails, too. A great deal of spirit. Must get it from her father. Good eyes, frank and straightforward mostly, but yet with an odd, basilisk-like way of veiling them occasionally. Nothing otherwise furtive or scared about her.

Maybe after all her mother was wrong! Must have some admirers a girl like that Dainty ankles. Wonder if she pinched those silk stockings she has on! And if she isn't humming a song! Surely a girl with an uneasy conscience-Wow! how she swatted that fly! Brains, spunk and speed!"

He had credited her with the firstnamed as early as ten o'clock. She had known enough, in sorting the bottles. to group the acids by themselves, the oils, ditto, and his letter fyles had undergone a metamorphosis at her hands long before noon.

"May I put these geraniums where the sun can get at them?'

Dr. Service glanced up. No cap awry

"Certainly." "You had them in the wrong window, you know.

"But why toil in your lunch hour, Miss There's a long afternoon Lister? ahead."

· The girl returned, after placing the plants in the south windows.

"Do you call this toil?" she asked, whimsically and with a little twist of scorn to her lip. "Why, I've just played all morning! I—I'm so happy I could

Her voice caught in a half sob. "I'm very glad you like the position." he said gravely.

"It's not altogether that. It's-the freedom and the life and the-change." She began impulsively, and ended with swift reserve.

"Country life has palled?"

"It's fierce," said Miss Lister frankly. Dr. Service folded up his paper. He sent her several observant glances. She stood leaning against the tall oak instrument case thrumming with restless fingers on its top. In her shadowy eyes there was a kind of seething discontent and passionate defiance combined.

"Perhaps you'll not care so much for the city when the novelty wears off," he suggested.

"Well-I'm not borrowing trouble on that," she said with a short, unmirthful laugh. "Before that time comes I'll have made some friends, I hope."

"Friends? Why, surely you already-" "Girl friends. Those of my own age. I've never had a girl chum in all my life. I-I feel like an escaped prisoner!"

"My dear girl!" "Yes, I mean it! Mothers' Missionary Teas, And dull good-natured married women and crying babies and prayer meetings and always the same old shabby clothes to wear, and no money to go anywhere, and-and looking round you, and picturing your own probable future stuck there in that dead backwater all your life, no chance to make something

of yourself, no fun like other girls-oh!" She turned quickly to hide a rush of hot tears. Her small hands were clenched But when she tightly at her sides. wheeled again she was smiling.

"But now!" she cried, a glad little ring to her tone. "Oh, it's going to be heavenly! I-I feel as though you were were my deliverer. I can't tell youjust can't-how grateful I am! Aunt Jane has come to stay with mother and I hope she stays forever! I'll never go

Continued on Page 11



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